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[JANET LEESON'S INTERVIEW WITH LORD INGARSTONE.]

THE WARNING VOICE.

By the Author of "Mrs. Larkell's Boarding School," "Man and His Idol," &c.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE LOVER, AND HOW TO TREAT HIM.

By keeping men off, you keep them on.
Beggars' Opera.

Who travels by this road so late?
French Song.

As Curly Holt followed Miss Aggy Crofts about like a tame spaniel, it is to be presumed that he found some comfort or peace of mind in that exercise. Yet, to all appearance, it was quite the reverse of this, and his engagement seemed to bring with it nothing but perpetual worry and irritation.

While Curly was ill—while there seemed a chance of her losing him—Aggy, to use her own expression, "cried her eyes out" over him, and petted and fondled and nursed him with more than a sister's tenderness.

But tenderness was not Aggy's strong point. She was sharp and snappish; and, in her treatment of her lover, hard and exacting. There was no softness in her black eyes; they were small and glittering, and sharp as steel points. And her rosy cheeks and other indications of robust health gave little indication of female weaknesses. In fact, without being hard-hearted or bad-hearted, she despised weakness in any form, seemed to feel it necessary constantly to assert her power, and to test the strength of poor Curly's affection by putting it perpetually on trial.

So, as soon as he showed signs of recovery, Aggy ceased to cry, and began to tease, and to be, as her friends described it, "up-ish and stand-off-ish."

Curly perceived the change with dismay. He was of an affectionate disposition, and yearned for love and sympathy, and for those fond arts by which the tender passion usually expresses itself.

Aggy knew this; but she did not any the more give in to it.

"She wasn't weak enough for that, she hoped," she

would say. "She had some spirit left, thank heaven! And some sense of propriety, too."

Curly's constant desire was that they should be "comfortable" together—like other lovers.

To this "comfortable" doctrine, Aggy declared herself to be, on principle, opposed.

"She'd no notion of letting a man make a fool of her—and himself, too," she declared; "before people, too. There was nothing more sickening in the world than the way some people went on as soon as they were engaged. As for her, she hadn't patience with it."

Part of Curly's idea of being "comfortable," consisted in an insane desire, on his part, to encircle Aggy's trim waist with his arm, at all seasonable and unseasonable moments.

This the lady strongly resented.

"She hated," she protested, "being manled about." Other advances she met in the same spirit.

If Curly suggested—in a whisper—as lovers are prone to suggest, that the evening or the night was beautiful, and that a walk in the orchard might be agreeable, she would at once disconcert and silence him, exclaiming aloud, and before everybody:

"What! Walk in the orchard? What for? If you want to go, go! And don't make yourself ill with the windfalls, mind!"

"But, Aggy," he would mildly urge, "I've something to say to you."

"Indeed! Something particular, I dare say! Very particular, no doubt! I have no secrets, sir; thank you, sir. So if you've anything to say, you can out with it here."

Of course Curly had a great deal to say—young gentlemen in his state of heart always have—and of course he declined, as Aggy knew well enough would be the case, to "out with it" before a mixed assemblage.

There were times when the black-eyed lass relented, and permitted herself to go to the verge of being "comfortable"; but these occasions were rare, and were only indulged in just to lead the lover on, to tantalise him, and so keep him in a continual state of perturbation, such as Aggy held to be wholesome for him.

For girls whose courtship was all honey she had a

supreme contempt, and it might have been in her fear of imitating them that she infused into poor Curly's lot an amount of gall and bitterness such as sometimes almost drove him to distraction—but never quite. For it was Aggy's boast that, though she might at times "go a little too far," she had only to hold up a finger and all was right again.

Now, as may be supposed, Curly Holt felt acutely the terrible sentence which had been passed upon his unfortunate brother.

And in this moment of trial it was only natural that he should fly to Aggy for consolation.

It was evening—a red and stormy sunset flushing all the sky—when he quitted his father's house, and, dashing across the park, blinded by the beams of the low sun, reached Ingarstone. Aggy had her own room, which was reached by the servants' entrance, and Curly, having gained admittance, proceeded direct to it.

He found her sitting in the bay window, on which the sun shone, but was obstructed by a heavy curtain, which, being half-drawn, left the room half in light and half in shadow.

Curly thought he had never seen Aggy look half so pretty as she did that evening. Her black hair was so smooth, and her eyes were so bright, and the rose in her cheeks glowed so redly that it was only to be matched by her pouting lips—for Aggy's lips did pout at all times. That was their natural and provoking state. She was always dressed in the neatest and nattiest style, being one of those persons who are naturally clean and tidy, like certain birds whose feathers are not to be ruffled under any circumstances. But on this occasion, her lover thought her unusually bewitching in attire. She wore a light muslin, dotted with faint spots, and set off with a neat collar, and one of the most coquettish little black silk aprons ever beheld, with pockets that would hold nothing on earth but the wearer's two forefingers, but which, nevertheless, seemed indispensable to the completeness of the coquettish-provoking attire.

Aggy was looking out of window as her lover entered the room; and on hearing him, she bounced up with a start.

"Gracious!" she exclaimed, "how you do frighten one!"

"I didn't mean to do it, Aggy," said Curly, meekly. "Oh! I dare say. You never do mean anything that I can make out. There! Don't stand twirling that horrid hat of yours. Put it down and bring a chair—not that one with the broken back, unless you want to come down sprawling. That's better. Why, your eyes are red! What's the matter?"

"Poor Tim! you know, Aggy—" the youth began.

Aggy suddenly drew herself up. "I'm glad you've mentioned it," said the lady, taking up the corner of her black apron, and beginning to roll it slowly round and round. "It would have been very unpleasant for me to do it!"

"Oh! I knew you'd be so sorry and so cut up," Curly returned, tears beginning to well up into his eyes.

"As to that," she replied, "of course it's unpleasant and annoying—very annoying."

"It's dreadful!" exclaimed Curly.

"And places me in a position that I ought never to have been placed in," returned Aggy. "Oh, it's very well for you to stare and look surprised. Of course, you haven't thought of me or my feelings. Men are all horrid selfish, and you're not different to the rest. Why should you be? There's no reason that I know of. And you ain't—of course you ain't."

And she smoothed out her apron with a flick.

"Oh, Aggy, what is it? What have I done?" cried the weak lover.

"Done! Oh, you've done nothing. 'Tisn't likely. But anybody but you would see that what's happened has altered everything between us—if there ever was anything between us; and I don't know, I'm sure, whether there ever was."

"Aggy, Aggy!" ejaculated the youth.

"Now, don't. I say again—don't. It's fitting that I should speak my mind, and speak it I must and will. I say that what's happened has made a great difference—a very great difference—in everything. It is very dreadful for you, of course; but it can't be expected that I should sacrifice myself, because of it. And if I was to, you wouldn't appreciate it, or think any the better of me for it."

"I couldn't think any the better of you for anything," interposed Curly.

"Oh, I dare say," returned the girl, with a toss of her head, as if the compliment offended her, which it was far from doing. "But that's neither here nor there. The point is, that since your brother has gone and disgraced himself, and disgraced his family, and got the family name into newspapers, and Newgate Calendars, and things, it's for me to consider whether I should have any more to do or say with the family; and that you'd have seen if you wasn't as blind as a bat and as inconsiderate as all you men are—all of you, without one exception."

Curly listened to this speech aghast.

It came upon him like a thunderbolt.

"You don't mean, Aggy—oh! you don't and can't mean that you're going to throw me off, after all that there's been between us, only because my poor brother's been unfortunate, and got into trouble!"

"Thus he adjoined her.

"As to trouble," she retorted, "and as to misfortune—these are very fine names to give it; but they're not what other people call it. Other people call it awful wickedness and depravity and crime. That's what other people call it."

"But he is innocent. Surely you don't believe that he isn't innocent?" pleaded Curly.

"I believe!" cried Aggy, with a sniff. "I don't set myself up for believing. I haven't the conceit of some people. I don't think myself more clever than judge and jury put together. I'm willing to believe what the world believes, sir; and let me tell you that I never did consider Holt a pretty name—I've said so a thousand times—and I'm not likely to think any the better of it after it's been dragged in the mire in this way. So, I'm afraid I must say 'No' now, once and for all!"

"Oh! Aggy, don't—don't say it!" pleaded Curly.

"I'm afraid I must," replied the other, rolling up her apron very hard indeed.

"But it would be cruel to make me suffer as well as him."

"It may be," she answered; "I can't help it."

"But you won't say it? You won't say it today?"

"To-day or to-morrow—it's all the same," she retorted.

"No; something may happen."

"Nonsense, sir—what can happen?"

"I don't know," said Curly, abjectly.

"I should think not," cried Aggy.

"But even if it don't," urged the lover, suddenly catching at an idea, "t isn't so much worse than what happened in your own family. Your uncle Joe did shoot a man, Aggy."

It was an unfortunate shot.

The irate damsel sprang up with a face all ablaze with anger.

"Oh, you cruel, wicked man!" she burst out.

"You coward, too! You wouldn't have dared to say such a thing to anybody but a defenceless woman. When you know that it was only a poacher that uncle Joe shot—only a poacher, sir! And when you know, as you do, that he was honourably acquitted, with only a year's imprisonment, as a caution to him not to be too free with fire-arms. Oh, the meanness, the littleness, the spitefulness of bringing up uncle Joe against me! I never did—no, I never did! And for that I will say it."

"Oh, Aggy, Aggy, don't; pray don't!"

"I will."

"Not final? Not 'No' for ever?"

"For ever."

"Oh, Aggy, you can't have the heart to do it?"

"Can't I, sir? But I have—the heart, and the tongue, and the lips. I can say it, and I will say it. No—no—no! There, now it's done, and all's over between us, and I've no more to say."

"But, Aggy—"

She only tossed her head, and jerked herself away from him, and took up her work, at which she began to stitch fiercely and vigorously.

Curly, driven to despair, urged, and pleaded, and entreated; but it was of no use. Aggy Crofts was inexorable; and so, after a time, he sorrowfully took his leave.

"Good-night!" he sobbed, as he stole out of the room.

"Good-night, Mr. Holt!" said Aggy, briskly.

That "Mr. Holt" went to poor Curly's heart, as Aggy well knew it would, and he quitted Ingarstone in utter despair.

But such was the caprice of this young woman's nature, that her asperity vanished directly he had quitted her, and she dropped her work, and anxiously peered out of the window to catch a glance at him as he went through the park. Then she exclaimed:

"Poor fellow! He'll be back again to-morrow!"

and appeared to derive infinite comfort from that reflection.

Another example of the same inconsistency was furnished that night.

The stormy sunset gave place to a wet and stormy night.

There was a high, blustering wind, and the rain swept through the park in heavy gusts, dashing upon the trees as if it would bear them to the earth, and charging the windows of Ingarstone like hail.

In the midst of the storm, Aggy suddenly recollected that one or two of the favourite plants with which she adorned her room had been given to the gardener that day to be freshly potted, and that he had left them down in the garden.

With her usual briskness, she jumped up at once, and running down-stairs, opened the door by which Curly Holt had left, and was about to dash out into the little garden between this door and the surrounding park, when she started at some object which confronted her.

It was a woman, ragged and wet to the skin, who leant against the porch, and looked at her with imploring eyes.

"Who are you? What are you doing here?" Aggy demanded, sharply.

"You don't know me, Aggy Crofts?" asked a feeble voice.

"Know you? No. How should I?" said the sharp young lady's maid, eyeing the stranger suspiciously.

"We were friends," the other said, in a gasping whisper.

"Eh? Friends? What's your name?"

"I used to be called—Janet Leeson."

"Nonsense! She's dead. No. Gracious me! Why, Janet!"

She had seized the ragged, emaciated, dripping woman, and dragged her into the house in a breath.

"You're ill! Fainting! Hungry p'raps!" she rattled on. "And whatever brings you back to Ingarstone?"

"Is it true?" gasped the woman.

"Is what true?" asked Aggy.

"That he's tried and sentenced?"

"Tim? Yes."

"Tried for murder? Sentenced to death?"

"Don't think of it, dear," urged Aggy.

"What! Do you fancy I can think of anything else?" asked poor Janet Leeson. "He lying cast for death, and I think of aught else? No, no! I heard of it far away, down in the cotton country, and I've walked myself lame, starved myself, brought myself to death's door, that I might find out the truth. Tim cast for death, and I not think of it! Oh, Aggy, Aggy, how could you say it?"

Her weakness was so great, that even this effort at speech exhausted her, and as she ceased, she sank overcome into the plying woman's arms.

And did Aggy Crofts leave her exposed to the pitiless elements?

Did she remember the shame that Radical Holt had brought on his family and all connected with it, and withhold all sympathy from his old sweetheart?

No, this capricious beauty behaved in this crisis like a true and tender-hearted woman, as she was, in spite of her sharp temper and stinging tongue. She caught up the fainting, sodden, mud-bedraggled form of Janet Leeson, and carrying it up-stairs in her arms as she would have carried a child, laid it on her own bed.

"Poor thing! And to think that it might have been me and Curly!"

That was her pitying reflection.

CHAPTER XXXVI

THE WANDERER.

There is no being in this world of ours,
So poor, so fallen, so mean but it may be
An agent in the hands of Providence
For its great ends.

Overy.

It was the remembrance of past times which had induced Janet Leeson to seek out Aggy Crofts at Ingarstone, and she had not been mistaken as to the character of that sharp and snappish young person in taking that step.

As girls they had been fast friends, inseparable almost, widely as their natures differed; indeed in this case, as in many others, diversity seemed the bond of union. As they were unlike in everything, so they seemed to find in their contrarieties some principle which held them together.

In joining contrasts both love's delight, says the poet, and it is as true of friendship as of love.

In spite of years, the old feeling of love for Janet survived strong in Aggy's heart.

Janet had known so much trouble, and it was but natural that a true, staunch-hearted friend should feel herself drawn toward her more closely than ever in consequence.

As she saw her lying there in the rain, ragged, starving, and beaten down like some useless weed, Aggy's mind went back to the time when that weed was esteemed a flower of rare beauty, the pride and glory of Ingarstone. She recalled, in a moment, as the mind will sometimes at such junctures, the pretty face with the tangled chestnut tresses floating about it, the coquettish little hat that just rested on the darling head, and the neat spruce dress that was the envy of half the girls, and the distraction of all the lads of the village. Then there flashed on her mind the day when, as they strolled hand in hand, under the pink blossoms, in her uncle Leeson's orchard, Janet confessed to her a liking—so she called it—for Radical Holt. And with this memory came another, of the pang with which she heard those words, and of the shivering dread that harm and not good would come of that liking, which, indeed, meant intense and passionate loving.

Instructively, too, she recalled, at the sight of that white wasted face, how the rumour of the engagement between Janet and Holt's handsome but reckless son came to be talked of in the village, and how people shook their heads, and predicted that "no good would come of it." Then how, for a time, the lad was steady, and took kindly to work, and Janet was happy—oh, so very, very happy! and more beautiful than ever. And then the crash that followed—the horrible night when the news spread like a malaria that there had been a burglary at Ingarstone, and that young Holt was concerned in it, was taken up, and would be tried for the offence.

That night was never to be forgotten by Aggy Crofts, nor the terrible scenes that followed—Holt's conviction—his father's curse—his departure, and Janet's misery, prostration, and utter despair. Nor, lastly, did her memory fail to summon up the after consequences, when Janet, morbidly sensitive to the opinions of others, grew to believe that she was despised and shunned for her lover's act; and at last suddenly disappeared, going none knew whither—it might be to some other scene in which to drag out her miserable life; it might be to seek shelter in a nameless grave.

Such had been the career of the outcast to whom Aggy Crofts now extended prompt succour and attention.

In doing this, it did not occur to her that it might naturally be distasteful to the Ingarstones to give shelter to any one so closely connected as poor Janet was with the man at whose hands they had suffered an irreparable wrong. It was Janet herself who, on recovering consciousness, suggested this. Then Crofts saw the difficulty, and fell debating with herself how to remedy it. Her first impulse was to try and conceal her friend in some one of the untenanted rooms in the old house; but against this course there were obvious objections. Janet, for her part, wanted to be gone—to trust to chance for food and shelter, while she accomplished the sole object of her existence,

that of obtaining one final interview with the man under sentence of death. To this Aggy was firmly opposed, and at last resolved, as the only thing that suggested itself, to impart the whole facts of the case to her lady, under the seal of secrecy, and to be guided by her advice.

This was the more practicable as Beatrice Ingarstone still kept her room, suffering from the effects of the fire and the shock which the occurrences of that night, in the gipsies' tent, had given her.

Happily, the fire had spared her beauty, nor was it likely that she would suffer from the disfigurement of scars, even where the flames had touched her. The remedies applied by the gipsies prevented this; but the patient still pined from mental as much as bodily suffering.

At first she had been nervously anxious as to the fate of the gipsy-queen, and when she was informed that death had done its work, and that the woman was in her grave, the intelligence had agitated rather than soothed her.

And no wonder. It was a terrible thing to feel that she had been so near a secret which might affect the life of a fellow-creature, and which was now lost, it might be for ever. When the news of Tim Holt's conviction reached her, the emotion of Beatrice from this cause was intense. He might be innocent, in spite of appearances; while the guilty perpetrator of the dark crime might be gloating over the result of the fatal trial. And all this another moment of time might have prevented.

In addition to this distressing reflection, the lady could not shut her eyes to the fact that, while she remained an inmate of the sick chamber, the strange guest Donna Ximena de Cordova was occupying her place in the mansion, and in Ormond Redgrave's attention.

But this in passing. Watching her opportunity as he sat beside her lady's couch, Aggy Crofts adroitly led the conversation round to Holt in his condemned cell, and so by degrees introduced the subject of Janet Leeson and her presence at Ingarstone.

Beatrice was deeply affected by the story of Janet's sufferings, and her first impulse was to mention the subject to her father. But she could hardly fail to be aware that there was something very strange and very unusual in his lordship's manner, and in that of her brother Cecil, something for which she could not account, and this made her hesitate.

She, however, resolved to see Janet. So the wan, trembling outcast was introduced into the lady's luxurious chamber, and Beatrice could hardly refrain from an exclamation of astonishment at the sight of her. She recollected well enough the blooming girl they had called "the beauty of Ingarstone," and could hardly credit that this wreck of a woman was the same.

Tenderly and sympathisingly she inquired how she had sunk to her present state?

The answer involved a brief and simple narrative. Poor Janet had wandered away, heart-broken and weighed down with shame. Hardly caring what she did, she had turned her hand to any occupation that promised the means of keeping body and soul together. Sometimes she went hop-picking, sometimes got employment as an extra hand to help in the kitchen at large houses, and so gained a precarious existence. This failing, at length, she was tempted to seek out a camp of gipsies to whom she was known from the circumstance that, as a school girl of great beauty, she had been enticed away and lived the gipsy life for more than a year, until she quarrelled with a young gipsy girl and ran away home. While she thought of this, she was persecuted by a fellow lodger at some lodging house to travel down to Manchester and seek employment in the mills there; and this she had done, remaining there until news of Tim Holt's return to England, capture, and trial for murder, reached her through the newspapers.

Then she quitted the factory, and set off direct to the scene of her early happiness and misery. She was very poor. Means for setting out on so long a journey she had none—but nothing could deter her from taking it. Her woman's heart—the depth and intensity of her unquenchable love—surmounted every difficulty, and she had reached her destination. Her only thought now was how she should gain admission to the condemned cell.

"They will let me see him, won't they, my lady?" she asked.

"No doubt, if application is made in the proper quarter," was the answer.

"Oh, yes, yes!" exclaimed the half-frantic woman, "I must see him. I must speak to him, and tell him that I believe him innocent—and I do believe it: I will believe it, whoever tries to swear his life away. They will never let him go out to death and refuse me a word with him. It's impossible! Oh, impossible!"

"I promise you my utmost influence, my poor

girl," replied her ladyship; "but for the present it might be as well if your presence here was not known. Crofts will attend to you, and I will bear your wishes constantly in mind, and do what I can to further them."

"Heaven bless you, my lady!" cried poor Janet, the tears streaming down her wan cheeks.

"Nay, no thanks!" said Beatrice. She had hardly uttered the words, when Crofts burst into the room, her face full of consternation and a finger on her lips.

"Oh, my lady, she is coming!" whispered the girl.

"She!"

"The Spanish lady, Donna—Donna—"

"Enough," interrupted her ladyship. "What is to be done?"

"She is here."

Crofts had hardly uttered the words, before Janet, terrified at the idea of being discovered, rushed to the curtains at the foot of the bed, and hid her wasted form among them.

At the same moment, the silken sweep of Donna Ximena's robes was heard, and her ample form appeared in the doorway. Her quick perception showed her that her visit was unwelcome, and that the patient was confused and uneasy; but she only noticed it, being too good a tactician to show that she did so.

With an imperious wave of the hand, she dismissed Crofts from the room.

Then, taking a seat by the couch, she said:

"You are recovering the effects of the gipsy's treachery?"

"I am better," said her ladyship, declining to enter on the treachery question.

"Your indisposition has spared you a very painful scene," she then remarked.

"You allude to the trial?"

"Yea. The position of young Holt was pitiable. His guilt was as clear as noonday, and his cowardly denial of it was painful in the extreme."

"He protested his innocence to the last, did he not?" asked Beatrice.

"To the very last."

"Strange!" exclaimed her ladyship. "And it was on that very point that the gipsy woman was so anxious to communicate with me. She knew the murderer; and, but for the strange accident of the fire, would have communicated the secret to me. And now her lips are closed for ever!"

"And you believe that she would have told you something worth hearing?" asked Donna Ximena, in a sarcastic tone. "You are deceived. These people are impostors. They make their living by lies—by pretending to a knowledge of the stars and the future, and an insight into mysteries which they do not possess. Believe me, it is all a delusion and a cheat. The gipsy woman could have told you nothing."

"You know something of these people?" asked Beatrice.

"Why, who does not?" was the retort.

"But, you have had some special experience of them?"

"I? Oh, no. By the way, Lord Ingarstone and your brother visit the prisoner to-morrow."

"And you?"

The donna turned sharply on the question, and the colour forsook her cheeks.

"No, my dear; that would be no sight for me," she said. "Besides, I suppose we shall return to town in the morning."

"Indeed! You are not tired of Ingarstone, I hope?"

"No; but Redgrave goes, and so, of course—"

But I shall see you again, dear. Good-bye for the present."

And gloating over the effects of that mention of Redgrave's name, she sailed from the room.

The instant she was gone, Janet Leeson staggered forward from her hiding-place, flushed, and greatly agitated.

"That lady is your friend, my lady?" she faltered.

"She is our guest," was the answer.

"And she calls herself—"

"She is known to us as the Donna Ximena de Cordova. She is of a Spanish family."

"No, my lady, no! I know her well! She is—"

But at that instant Crofts stole in, with uplifted finger, and motioned Janet Leeson back to her place of concealment.

CHAPTER XXXVII

PROPOSED AND ACCEPTED.

Runs all this venery passion to a head?

Are we engulfed so soon?

Ford.

Or all places to make love in, commend us to a lonely, rambling, old-fashioned country house, buried in its own grounds.

Ingarstone was a model of such a place, adapted for

such a purpose, and so Donna Ximena soon found it. Indeed, if anything, it was too favourable for the particular pursuit mentioned. In the constrained absence of the Lady Beatrice, who was confined to her own room, the donna made but too rapid progress in the affections of Ormond Redgrave.

To a woman of her organization this was almost painful.

She had gone down prepared for rivalry—for combat—for victory.

She thought to have asserted the power of her charms, her generalship—to have fought for Redgrave, distanced her rival, and borne him off in triumph. As it was, the conquest was so easy as to afford no satisfaction, except when she thought of what the end might be.

Then indeed her eyes gleamed and her lip quivered; then her sensations were those of the tigress on her first taste of blood.

As to Redgrave himself, his days were passed in alternating moods of rapture and remorse. One hour he would give himself up to the intoxicating delight of the passion which the enchanting stranger had inspired in his breast; the next he would charge himself with the blackest ingratitude and most heartless perfidy for his treatment of the Lady Beatrice; always, however, reserving for himself this consolation, that he had no right to have attempted to cut Nolan out, and that it was rather virtuous than otherwise to have relieved the lady of a difficulty.

This was the state of feeling on both sides up to the time of the trial at the assizes.

That event produced a decided change, but only on the part of Donna Ximena. There seemed no reason why it should have done so—but it obviously did. Little as she could possibly be interested in the matter except as a spectator, her manner changed from the moment that the prisoner was removed from the dock and the Ingarstone party quitted the court.

On the road home she was absent and thoughtful; spasmodically gay at intervals, then melancholy, and, above all, singularly nervous.

All noticed it—no one commented on it.

Redgrave referred the symptoms to the natural effects of a trying scene on a woman. Lord Ingarstone was too well bred to notice anything; and as to Cecil, there was some strange influence over his mind which kept him silent.

The nervous, excited, and unusual manner of the donna did not pass away; but neither did it affect her conduct towards Redgrave. She was, if anything, more tender, more clinging, more fascinating, more bewitching than ever. It seemed as if she could not bear him out of her sight; and as he had much the same feeling, they were nearly always together.

Such was the case when—about an hour before the donna visited Beatrice—Lord Ingarstone had suddenly announced his intention of visiting the prisoner Holt in his cell.

At that announcement the donna had looked aguish. "Is it not very unusual, my lord," she had contrived to say.

"Very. Fact is, Holt's father old servant of mine—respected, and all that kind thing—deuced strange statement of prisoner's 'bout gaming-house, and woman, and rest of it. Have obtained judge's order to see prisoner in presence of officers, chaplain, so forth. Bore, 'pon my life, but may be satisfactory."

"Such a thing is unheard of!" had been the lady's indignant exclamation.

On which Cecil Ingarstone had slowly, calmly, and with the keen, glittering eye of a snake, asked whether she would make one of the party?

Her polite refusal was an effort; but she made it successfully.

And from that moment she knew that Cecil Ingarstone dared her to mortal combat. He also knew—though not a word passed—that she accepted the challenge, and prepared to shape his course accordingly.

It was chiefly to relieve herself of the effects of this interview that Donna Ximena visited Beatrice Ingarstone in her sick chamber, which, as we have seen, she quitted with an air of triumph, and totally unconscious of impending danger—at least, as the result of that simple visit.

Her uneasiness sprang from other sources.

And as she walked out on the terrace fronting the house, and thought over her position and the effects which events were likely to have upon her, this so increased, that she more than once staggered like one affected with vertigo, and was compelled to cling to the balustrade for support.

"Would to God I had never come to this place!" she muttered at length. "It was a mistake. It was an infatuation. I should have waited till all was over, and then measured my strength against hers. I have been fool-hardy, as usual. But no matter for the past—what does the future say? If the stars could speak, as we pretend they can, what would their advice be? First, instant flight—that for safety. Next, to secure

Redgrave while I have the chance, not only for vengeance, but for my own defence. Cecil Ingarstone means mischief: he has the whip-hand of me, and the strongest inducement to make the most of his advantage. I must be bold and wary, or heaven help me!"

No traces of this stormy feeling marred the woman's beauty as, an hour or two after, she came down dressed for dinner, dressed in the most magnificent style and looking superb.

As usual, she was the centre of attraction at table. Ingarstone, who was apt to take a little more of his old crusty port than modern usage warranted, and who always became oppressively polite under the effects of it, overwhelmed her with attentions and compliments. Redgrave sat like one entranced. Cecil alone was cold and reserved, like the skeleton at the Egyptian feasts.

When they retired to the drawing-room for coffee, Ingarstone, as was his custom, soon—after profuse apologies—covered his head with his handkerchief and fell into a doze: his son soon drank his coffee and disappeared, and thus it happened that the donna was left reclining on a luxurious couch, with Ormond seated by her side.

"I am afraid I drag you back to town sooner than you care to go," she said, after watching him for a few moments over the top of her fan.

"Why, what would this place be without you?" was his gallant inquiry.

The donna sighed.

"It has had its attractions," she murmured.

Ormond's face darkened for a moment. Then he said:

"It is impossible to revive old feelings. We can no more experience to-day the emotions of yesterday than, as the poet expresses it,

A rose can shut and be a bud again."

"Ormond," said the donna, bending forward till her dark eyes rained their unwholesome influence on him, and her fragrant breath was warm on his cheek, "I am most unhappy."

"Indeed!" he cried, with surprise.

"Yes," she went on; "I feel that my coming to this place was a mistake. The invitation was most kind, and it was gratifying to find you and your friends so ready to gratify my wish; but I blame myself for ever having expressed such a wish, and for placing you and myself in the position we now occupy. Ormond, the world will talk."

"The world?"

"Yes. It is busy, wicked, censorious, and will put the blackest construction on everything. It was not to be supposed that it would spare us, and this I ought to have foreseen. My coming here has given occasion to busy tongues. The envious will not believe in the purity and disinterestedness of our friendship: they will insist on regarding us in a false light. In a word, I have reason to know that I am suspected of coming here as a rival to Lady Beatrice in your affections."

"Ximena!" cried the young man, "this is fancy—this is, this can be only a delusion."

The donna shook her head mournfully, and drew a square of lace, with rounded corners, from the pocket of her dress, preparatory to applying it to her eyes.

"I tell you," Ormond continued, "that there is nothing in all this which ought to cause you a moment's uneasiness. I stand in the same relation to Lady Beatrice as to any other lady of my acquaintance. Even if my heart prompted me to closer ties, it would be impossible. Lady Beatrice is, as you know, engaged. The relations between her and Mr. Nolan have never been broken off, and will no doubt be renewed. At all events, I have no right to step between and prevent such a consummation. I should be a villain, I should be a scoundrel, I should disgrace myself did I permit my feelings, however strong they might be toward Ingarstone's daughter, to blind my sense of our relative positions. This being so, I entreat you to dismiss from your mind any apprehensions you may entertain, and to shape your conduct by your own feelings and not by any other consideration."

"Thank you," cried the donna, with strong emotion; "I am glad to have had this assurance from your own lips. At the same time, it is better that I should return to town, and forgive me if I say it—alone."

"Alone!" echoed Redgrave.

"Yes, I think so; nay, I am sure of it."

"But why? What motive have you? What do you apprehend?"

"Ormond," she replied, tenderly, "there are feelings which may influence a woman's conduct, but to which it may be impossible for her to give expression."

"You mean—"

"Pray do not press me for an explanation. If your own heart does not supply one, words would be useless; and—pray spare me."

She applied the lace handkerchief to her eyes, and hid her face.

"Ximena!" cried Redgrave, "do not go. Do not leave me in doubt and uncertainty. What you have said does find an echo in my own breast. You cannot be ignorant—though I have never expressed it in words—of my admiration, my love for you."

The lady sighed, and sank back on the couch.

"The subject is a delicate one, and I have never ventured to broach it yet, feeling that while you were my guest, or that of my friends, I had no right to take advantage of the opportunities afforded me for pressing on your attention a subject that might be distasteful to you. Otherwise, I should not have hesitated to avow the impression you have produced on me, the fascination which your charms continue to exercise over my susceptible heart, and to ask you whether it was possible for you to make a sacrifice which would relieve me from a position of danger, and render me the happiest of men."

He caught at the donna's hand. She did not withdraw it. Her downcast face was crimson with blushes, and her lips murmured some inaudible words, which ended with a question as to the danger to which Redgrave was exposed.

"That," he replied, "of compromising my honour by taking advantage of Nolan's unhappy position. In a word, I will frankly admit that idle hours spent in this old mansion with Ingarstone's daughter had produced a net unusual effect, and had not your greater fascinations been exerted over me, I might have been tempted—"

"To a dishonourable act?"

"Yes; and it is from the possibility of such an occurrence that I entreat you to save me. You see, I am frank."

"I will be equally so," replied the donna, with lustrous eyes and throbbing bosom. "I will not return to town—alone."

Their hands met in one melting clasp, and they understood each other.

Ormond Redgrave had proposed to Donna Ximena de Cordova, and had been accepted.

When Lord Ingarstone drew the silk handkerchief from his head—with special care not to disturb his too natural wig—and looked around, he found himself alone. The lovers had fled.

He had just shrugged his shoulders, and rubbed his eyes with his knuckles, to assure himself that he was awake, when he observed that the drawing-room door slowly opened, and a face peered in.

It was a white, wan, pinched face, with eyes deeply buried in large dark rings. The next moment the body of a woman to which it belonged edged itself into the room.

"Gad, who's this?" asked his lordship, starting up in a rage. "Who are you, woman?"

"Oh, my lord!" pleaded Janet Leeson—for it was she—"I've lost my way, and oh, forgive me!"

"Lost your way? Mon'sious good! What business have you in my house?"

"My lady Beatrice—" Janet began.

"Get out!" cried his lordship.

"But, my lord!"

"Get out, I say. You're a common vagrant—an impostor—a trespasser. Out with you!"

"One word, my lord," cried poor Janet, falling on her knees, as she saw herself driven toward the open corridors, "one word before you turn me out of this house."

"Not one. Out baggage, out."

"But if your lordship would only hear me—"

"Woman, if my lordship catches you in my house or in my park in five minutes' time,"—he drew out his heavy gold watch as he spoke—"my lordship will give you a month at the wheel, as sure as you're born."

Driven to desperation at the thought of being turned from the house with no power of returning, Janet Leeson started up, and rushed to the open window; then turning abruptly, she exclaimed:

"One word you must hear, my lord. You go to the cell of the condemned man to-morrow. As you hope for mercy, see that your guest, the Spanish woman, goes with you, and that you confront her with the murderer, face to face."

Before he could recover from his intense astonishment, or utter a word in reply, the miserable outcast had disappeared through the window, and was gone.

(To be continued.)

A LOVE STORY.—A good love story is reported from Vienna. A lady of property, and thirty years, fell in love with a young lawyer, a Dr. Kant, and invited him to her house. He came, and she, imagining he was shy in popping the question, herself opened up the matter, and he replied: "I have already thought of marrying, and made my choice, but—" "But?" the lady hastily interposed. "But," he continued, "the lady is rich, very rich, and I am poor. I am afraid I can hardly aspire to her hand, and, rather than allow myself to be taxed with sordid designs, I will bury my passion in my breast, and leave it unavowed for ever." The next day she executed

a deed, making over the sum of £15,000 to Dr. Kant and sent him the deed, with a note to the following effect: "Dear sir,—I have much pleasure in enclosing a paper which I hope will remove the obstacle in the way of your marriage. Believe me, &c. Allice Martini." Thereupon he proposed for the hand of the Fraulein Fischel, the real lady of his love, and was accepted. Miss Martini forthwith sued the happy bridegroom for restitution; but, as no promise of marriage had been made, the case was, by two successive courts, decided against her.

THE STEPMOTHER.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Take her up tenderly!
Lift her with care—
Fashioned so slenderly,
Young—and so fair!

Moed.

THE returned East India nabob, who had figured so continually in the plans of Mrs. Willis and her daughter, was seated in one of his luxurious apartments, engaged in smoking. A Hindoo book lay open on his knee, and he frequently read whole sentences aloud therefrom, making audible comments upon them. A glass of sherbet was placed on a table by his side, and he occasionally sipped from it, in the intervals of his smoking.

The light in the room was full and soft, and a genial heat imparted a summer-like atmosphere and home feeling to the apartment, in strong contrast to the driving rain and sleet outside.

The nabob was about to summon Kayder to attend to his hookah, having his hand on a little bell for that purpose, when a gentle rap sounded on the door, and the Hindoo entered.

"May it please your excellency," he said, in softly modulated tones, as he made a low salaam, and advanced with noiseless steps to the side of his master, "some one is groaning on the steps."

"Well, let 'em groan," said the nabob, discontentedly. "I presume they're doing it on purpose to annoy me. You know I can't bear such things, Kayder; and I should think you might have such annoyances stopped. My nerves are all unstrung now, with hearing the barking of that dog this morning; and I shan't be able to endure much more. Go and get rid of the person. Give him money or anything; only get rid of him, or I shan't sleep a wink to-night!"

Kayder made another bow, and glided out of the room, going to the front door, and soon returning to his master.

"It is a young woman, your excellency," he said; "and wet through to the skin, I should think. The rain is beating right down upon her—"

"How dare you?" demanded his excellency.

"After living fifteen years with me, how dare you harrow up my feelings in that style? Ask her if she's drunk. Give her money. Call a policeman. If you don't protect me better than this, Kayder, I may as well die at once. My life isn't worth an anna, at this rate."

"But the woman does not seem drunk," said Kayder, deprecatingly; his face wearing a look of genuine sorrow at the annoyance the occurrence had caused his master.

"Then bring her in and give her brandy. Clear out! Don't quite kill me." And the nabob groaned, while Kayder disappeared, after another deprecating bow.

"I shall soon be shattered in mind and body," soliloquised his excellency, pushing his book off his knees so that it fell noiselessly on the thick carpet, and laying aside his hookah. "There's nothing but misery around me; and, do what I will, I cannot keep it out of sight and hearing. What's the use of suffering and groaning, and wind and rain? Why can't everything go on as smoothly as one of those soft, spice-breathing Indian days?"

He sighed profoundly.

At the same moment a gentle tap came upon the door, and was followed by the entrance of his other servant, a faithful Hindoo, who reported that Kayder had taken in the young woman, and desired his master's advice in regard to her disposal.

"There! I knew it—I knew it! The rascal's taken the woman in, and she'll be the death of us! That Kayder is trying to kill me. You see he is. You know his object. I'll gratify him, and then he'll find what it is to be in a strange land without a friend! Give me my cane, and I'll go and look at the person he's picked up. Most likely the sight will kill me. I hope it will!"

He compressed his lips, took the gold-mounted bamboo cane his servant handed him, and went slowly into the hall, where the sight which met his gaze was that of Esther Willis, in a state of insensibility, and Kayder kneeling beside her, intent on her restoration to consciousness—she having been found in a fainting condition.

At the sight of her fevered beauty, her youth, freshness, and helplessness, all his excellency's cynicism and selfishness disappeared, and a look of commiseration and pity appeared on his face.

"Poor child," he said, scanning her costume, and taking, instinctively, an inventory of its value. "She is no poverty-stricken girl—the more's the mystery of her presence here. Bless my soul, how wet she is! Hi, Kayder! carry her up-stairs. Hurry—hurry! Why don't you start? I never saw such a heartless miscreant as you are, Kayder. Lively! She must be got to bed somehow. Don't you see she's got a fever?"

Kayder assented, expressing his pity for her; and then took her up in his arms, as if she had been an infant, and carried her up-stairs.

"Take her to the front room," ordered his excellency, following her. "Lay her on a couch."

The second Hindoo went on ahead, opening the door of the room mentioned, and Kayder bore his dripping and insensible burden into it, laying her on a silken couch.

"She must be put into bed," said his excellency, staring at the girl helplessly. "Those clothes will be the death of her, if they are left on. Now, if I only had a woman about the house! It must be late—too late to send for a neighbour, even if one would come. What is to be done?"

"Your excellency is old enough to be her father," suggested Kayder. "Why not put her in bed yourself?"

"Sure enough, she might have fallen into worse hands than mine. You're worth your weight in gold, Kayder. One of you run for hot drinks, the other for cold water. Between you and I, Kayder, we'll have her cured by morning."

The men disappeared to execute his commands, and his excellency regarded his beautiful guest with a strange feeling of pity stirring at his heart.

"It seems as if I'd seen her or some one like her before," he muttered. "That noble brow looks familiar to me. How very beautiful she is!"

With a gentle and fatherly touch, and with the utmost delicacy and tenderness, he removed the maiden's wet and clinging outer garments, and placed her in a warm bed.

As he hung her dress over a chair, the will which she had placed in her bosom fell out. He picked it up and opened it.

As his eyes ran over the document, he uttered an exclamation of surprise, and sank into a chair; the ruddy colour fading entirely out of his cheeks, and leaving them ghastly white.

"The last will and testament of John Willis," he said, hoarsely, "bequeathing everything to his well-beloved daughter, Esther Willis. Then this beautiful girl must be the daughter of John Willis!"

He read the will through, leaned his head on his hand as if to collect his thoughts and subdue his agitation, and then placed the will in his breast pocket, and arose, going to the bed-side.

"I thought I recognized her," he said, looking upon her fevered face. "She is the very picture of John Willis when he was a boy—only softened and refined into a lovely woman; and this is Esther Willis—destined for young Moreland! What is the mystery of her apparent desolation? I've heard all about her from her stepmother, who would never bring the girl here, despite my repeated invitations. It will turn out as I thought, that Mrs. Willis is a female shark, and heaven only knows how she may have wronged her stepdaughter!"

With a touch as gentle as that of a woman, his excellency bathed the poor girl's head and face in cold water, and soon restored her to consciousness.

The servants returning from their errands, he gave Esther a drink, and said:

"Kayder, you and I'll sit with her till she's better, and try what virtue there is in our stock of medical knowledge. Get me my case."

The Hindoo vanished, soon returning with an ebony box inlaid with gold, which his excellency opened with a gold key, displaying tiny vials filled with colourless liquids and powders. In one corner of the box was a small gold cup, with a spoon beside it of the same metal; and into this cup the nabob dropped a little liquid from one of the vials, mixing it with water.

He then lifted Esther's head and gave her the drink, she taking it with the meekness and docility of a child.

"If that takes effect, Kayder," then said his excellency, "she'll soon drop asleep, to awake refreshed and free from fever to-morrow."

"It will," said the Hindoo, gravely, "unless it is ordained that the fever shall eat the life from her heart. If anything can save her, she is already saved."

He seated himself, in obedience to his master's gesture, near the patient, and watched his excellency's movements with an earnest gaze, made up of faithfulness and devotion.

The nabob threw off his superb dressing-gown, and kept his soft white hands moving over the young girl's forehead, while he hummed a low sweet air, and endeavoured to soothe her to sleep.

But Esther was aroused from the stupor into which she had fallen, and began to talk, in her wild delirium, strange incoherencies, of which her host could make nothing.

As Kayder listened, he glanced at his master, inquiringly.

"It's all right, Kayder," said his excellency, kindly. "She may come out of it yet."

The gas-light was toned down to a gentle, mellow radiance, and the East Indian, with a strange gentleness, continued to soothe Esther, occasionally pausing long enough to gaze earnestly at her features. He pressed the silken coverlet close under her chin, and watched over her with fatherly care, until her voice began to falter in her ravings, and finally died out, she sinking to sleep.

He then arose from her bedside, saying to his servant:

"When she awakens, Kayder, the fever will be gone, and she will get well, or else she will have a long course of fever and die!"

"True, your excellency," said Kayder; "but we can tell her fate before she awakens. If she perspires, you know, she will wake up conscious."

His excellency nodded, and then began pacing the room with a thoughtful look, without his cane.

The cynical expression peculiar to his countenance had entirely vanished, and he showed that he was deeply concerned for the fate of the fair young girl who had so strangely fallen into his keeping.

As he walked to and fro, every time he neared the bedside he paused and bent over the girl, listening to the beating of her heart, feeling her pulse, or watching the changes of her countenance.

Kayder at such times gazed on his master's face, as if its every expression were known to him, and there was no need of words to chronicle the progress or waning of the fever.

Back and forth went his excellency, his tread uneven, as if his mind were torn with conflicting thoughts and harassed with anxieties—yet noiseless; his steps sinking into the Persian fabric without a sound. And every time he came near he listened and watched by the girl with immovable countenance for a moment, and then went on.

Hours thus wore away, and his excellency at length detected a gentle dew on Esther's forehead. His quick expression of gladness announced the fact to Kayder, who arose and stood beside his master, regarding the maiden.

"She will live?" asked the Hindoo.

"She will live!" replied his master, his tone soft and quiet. "She will awaken in the morning, and must not see strange faces at her bedside. We will put the bell-cord within her reach, so that she can summon us if she finds herself unable to rise. Her clothes must be warm and dry, so that she can dress herself if she is able. We will arrange things and then leave her."

He arranged her garments on several chairs, spreading out her skirts and dress so that they would be without wrinkles, near the bed, and then said:

"The first thing you do in the morning, Kayder, must be to get shoes and stockings for her, for these are ruined and useless."

The Hindoo picked up the wet and sodden articles and carried them out, while his master gave a last glance at the apartment, assuring himself that the light and heat were all right, picked up his casket of medicines, and followed.

"Poor child!" he said, as he went to his own room, next door to the one he had allotted Esther.

"How strangely she has fallen into my hands! There must be some cruel mystery involved in her homeless and homeless condition. I never heard of the girl till I was told of her existence by Mrs. Willis, and I had begun to think she was a myth. Her stepmother told me that her dear late husband had left her everything; and here's another will, leaving everything to this girl. To-morrow will solve the mystery!"

While thus soliloquizing, he had entered his chamber, which in every way represented perfect pictures of Indian scenes, having characteristic paintings on the walls, bamboo furniture, &c.

Kayder, having dismissed his fellow-servant to bed, came in and undressed his master, putting him to bed; and then threw himself, as was his custom, on a couch in the same apartment, and the whole house was soon wrapped in slumber.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Octavia.— These are the results

Of luckless deeds!

Countess.— They are the fruits

Of your contrivances!

Schiller.

WHEN Mrs. Willis, after her interview with Russell,

threw open the sliding doors, to confront him with Esther, she found the back apartment deserted—the Rev. Mr. Sutton having just conducted the half-fainting wife from the house, as recorded.

"Gone!" was her exclamation, with such genuine surprise that no one could have thought of doubting her sincerity. "Oh—ah—I see! She's overheard all she could bear, and the clergyman has taken her away!"

"The clergyman!" echoed Russell, as the paleness which had overspread his features became still more ghastly.

"Exactly, the clergyman—Mr. Sutton, I think Esther called him—the gentleman who married you this morning. He's been here the past hour, with your newly-made wife, and they have overheard every word you've uttered!"

Russell saw that his aunt was telling him the truth, and his terrible emotion prevented him temporarily from moving or speaking. Mrs. Willis seated herself, her face flaming with her jubilant revengefulness, and continued:

"You can see, my dear nephew, that you are not in every way the winner in this game. Esther has learned from your own lips the particulars of your late schemes, and you're quite welcome to every penny of her fortune you are likely to handle."

Russell realized that the clergyman had acquired a knowledge of the facts respecting the last will, and that there was consequently no possibility of suppressing it and making terms with Mrs. Willis. He also realized that Esther would not live with him, and that he was in a fair way to see but little of her money. Astounded, overwhelmed—completely crushed by the ruin which had overtaken his fine projects, he sank powerless into a chair.

"What an accursed fool I have been!" was the bitter thought that shaped itself from the chaos into which his mind was plunged. "I will have one satisfaction at least out of this business, if all else is lost—I'll have my revenge."

As soon as he could command his voice sufficiently, he said:

"You stirred up my feelings on purpose to betray me to your listeners, and made me forget my usual caution and help out your schemes. The game is up. That clergyman is aware of the existence of another will, and Esther is in his hands. I am ready for anything, though," he added, a dangerous light appearing in his eyes, "and you will yet learn what it is to cross my wishes."

He reflected a moment, falling back on his habitual philosophy, and finally declared to himself that he would soon have Esther in a lunatic asylum, or even assist her late shocks to kill her. Mrs. Willis shrank appalled before the expressions these reflections called to his face, and it was with no little relief that she at length saw him arise, put on his hat, and hasten from the house to look for his wife.

As soon as he had gone, the woman strove to reassure herself, but did not half-succeed in her effort, Pierre's last look haunting her as meaning deadly evil to her.

"I will take care of myself," she said, thoughtfully; "and, after all, Pierre would be very careful not to lay himself liable to the law. He's no worse off now than he was when he came up to town; in fact, he must have considerable money, besides his house and furniture. I needn't fear him; but what troubles me," she added, "is the way in which Ellnor went off, without asking my consent or advice. She seemed to throw me aside like an old glove, and heaven knows I would ruin my soul for her—the only being in the world that I love!"

Her features were convulsed with pain as she thought of her daughter, and she soon continued, with a sudden thought:

"It is possible that she did not go to the hotel she named. I will see."

She sprang up and rang the bell, ordering the servant who answered her summons to send the coachman to her without delay.

She then resumed her seat, awaiting his coming impatiently; but he almost immediately appeared.

"Joseph," she said, endeavouring to render her voice calm and unmoved, "where did you take Miss Stropes to-day?"

"To the station," replied the man, with considerable surprise.

Mrs. Willis's countenance fell, and she had hard work to control her voice as she observed, with assumed carelessness:

"It's all right, Joseph. I wished her to run up to our country seat for a few days, and see that the housekeeper was doing her duty. You may go. But stay," she added. "Go up-stairs and tell my brother-in-law, Mr. Stropes, that I desire his presence."

The servant withdrew to do her bidding.

"Gone—gone!" groaned the miserable mother, the pangs of retribution coming upon her in her tenderest point—her love for her child. "She has

forsook me. She has not gone to the country, but may have left town to throw me off her track. I shall never see her again. Oh, Elinor, Elinor!"

She was aroused from her grief by the entrance of her husband.

"Well, Dolly," he said, "how d'ye make out with yer nerry?"

"He went off, looking like a demon!" said Mrs. Willis, savagely, "and swearing revenge!"

"That's bad!" commented Jerry, reflectively.

"And more than that, his wife and a clergyman have got the last will," went on Mrs. Willis, with gathering desperation, "and Elinor's run away from me, and our game is completely played!"

"Jist so, Dolly. An' ef yer want my advice, I'll help yer. Let's pack up yer wallabies and run!"

"But we can't take everything," said Mrs. Willis, "and I hardly know where to commence to remove things. I want to keep everything. And I can't give up my new position in the first society—"

"Save what yer kin's, my motto!"

Mrs. Willis realized that it would be worse than useless to repine at her loss of station in society, or at her loss of valuables; and, with a heavy heart, she said:

"Take my clothes and such things first, Jerry, for I want them the most. Then my jewellery and ornaments, the silver plate—"

"I know—I know," said Jerry, nodding; "I've cleaned out a whole house afore this, with half the chance I've got now!"

Mrs. Willis gave him additional directions, and was about to say more about Elinor when the door-bell rung with a quick and sharp pull.

Mrs. Willis grew rigid with a sudden fear, while Jerry sprang to his feet, ready to leave by the back apartment, in case such a measure should be necessary.

A servant answered the bell, and ushered in Harry Moreland.

His face was stern in its resolute self-repression, and he looked many years older than he had looked that morning. The news of Esther's marriage had been to him like his death-warrant, and his anguish was visible in every feature of his haggard face.

"Oh, Harry," said Mrs. Willis, in a tone of relief. "I am really glad you managed to come up a few hours earlier than usual; for I fear you are confining yourself too closely to business. You are looking dreadfully. Oh, don't mind my brother-in-law, Harry; but just sit down on the sofa and let me bring you a glass of sherry—"

Moreland interrupted her assumed volubility by a gesture. He saw that, glad as she protested herself, she was really annoyed at his coming.

A sudden idea struck Mrs. Willis, and she exclaimed with genuine pleasure:

"Ah, I see, Harry. Elinor, the saucy girl, had a bit of a quarrel with me this morning, and said she knew who would take care of her, and so of course went straight to you. I suppose you have come to tell me that you and she are married."

"You are mistaken, madam," said Moreland, in a tone more stern and self-possessed than she had ever heard from him. "I am not married to Miss Stropes, and I never shall be. She called upon me to-day, and I desired her to release me from my engagement to her; never having loved, not even cordially esteemed her. After releasing me, she desired the payment of the note I gave you—"

"The note!" ejaculated Mrs. Willis, with a scream.

"I have it in my purse."

She drew her purse from her pocket, and examining its contents, found that the note was indeed gone.

"That's the best thing I ever heard of her," said Jerry, with a grin. "She's a chip of the old block, arter all."

"She stole it!" cried Mrs. Willis, disregarding her husband's comment. "You didn't pay it, of course? You have come to pay it to me? I want it now, as I have use for it!"

"I did not pay it to her," said Moreland, gravely, "and I cannot pay it to you. It must be accounted for to Mrs. Russell, in whose behalf the last will was made. Now that that will is recovered, justice demands that the money be paid to her, you making the note over to her."

Mrs. Willis almost fainted at this announcement, she having built upon the hope of having the ten thousand pounds lent to Moreland, and having resolved to present the note to him that very day.

"You know, then?" she stammered, guiltily.

"I know all," he replied, sternly. "I wish to remunerate you for the weeks spent here, since you invited me less as a guest than as a prospective relative."

He drew his purse from his pocket, and proceeded to count out a handsome price for his board and lodging since he had been in the house.

Mrs. Willis drew herself up, and began to say that she should not take money for her hospitality,

when her husband interrupted her and held out his hand to Moreland for the pay, saying:

"I'll take it, Mr. Moreland. I don't see no reason why Dolly should be so squeamish, seein' she'll want it enough afore she dies. 'Tain't no harm, seein' you know so much already, ter be told she's my wife, and was afore she married Mr. Willis."

"Jerry!" shrieked his wife, in angry expostulation.

"I heard from Mr. Sutton the relationship existing between you," returned Harry, dropping the money into Stropes' hand. "I will now remove my luggage—the cab I ordered being at the door."

He withdrew, admitting the cabman, and went upstairs for his luggage, helping the man to bring it down and put it on his cab.

He then re-entered the house, and laid his latch-key on the table.

"Harry," said Mrs. Willis, as he was about to go, "do you know where Elinor went?"

"I do not," he replied. "I presume, however, that she is stopping under an assumed name at some hotel."

"Let her go," growled Jerry, his parental instincts being lacking. "She ain't no good, an' I can't never make nothin' of her. She wa't brought up right, ter begin with, which is yer fault, Dolly; havin' said which, I don't say no more."

Mrs. Willis felt ashamed and disgusted with her husband, he appearing more than ever at a disadvantage beside the noble and manly Moreland.

"Then you will not pay the note?" she faltered, her thoughts reverting to her own prospects.

"No," returned Harry, refraining by a great effort from rebuking the woman as she deserved. "Farewell, Mrs. Stropes!"

He lifted his hat with the air of one taking a last adieu with considerable relief, and left the house.

He had not reproached Mrs. Willis with her falsehoods and infamous deceptions; but his manner had conveyed a keener rebuke than words could have done, and showed the guilty woman what an immeasurable gulf was between them.

"Well, Elinor has lost him!" she sighed. "So much the worse!"

"Yer hain't never told me what yer wanted her ter marry him for," said Jerry. "Why was it?"

Mrs. Willis evaded the question as best she could, and then said:

"The sooner you begin to move things, Jerry, the better. You'd best call a cab and take a big load at once. You can get them all away before you're stopped."

Jerry agreed to this arrangement, and went out for a cab, while his wife hastened to pack her trunks in readiness for removal.

The cab soon drove up, and the trunks were sent to the address of Mr. and Mrs. Stropes, at a quiet hotel.

"We won't stop there, Dolly," said her husband, preparing to ride in the cab with the luggage, and thus make all sure, "but jest leave the goods there till ter-morrer."

Mrs. Willis assented, and he drove off in triumph.

He made several other trips during the afternoon, and also sold off a quantity of portable goods; at length calling in a second-hand furniture dealer, and disposing of the entire furniture in the house, on condition of immediate payment and removal.

This was agreed to, and Stropes received the money for it, the goods to be partly removed that night, and the remainder the following day.

This arrangement delighted Jerry; and part of the goods were removed in the course of the evening, notwithstanding the rain.

That night proved a bitter and wakeful one to Mrs. Willis; but one hope sustained her—the hope of yet securing the nabob.

He had treated her with uniform kindness and consideration, but with nothing like affection or a desire to wed her, and she inwardly resolved to bring him to the desired point on the morrow.

She therefore arose on the following morning, with a sort of frenzied desperation, and prepared herself for the proposed visit, rouging her cheeks to conceal her ghastly paleness, perfuming her breath, oiling her abundant black hair till it shone like satin, and adorning herself in her most splendid costume.

"If I dress in too deep mourning," she said, pausing before the few dresses she had kept with her in reference to this visit, "he will think I feel Mr. Willis's death too deeply to think of a second marriage. If I dress too gaily, he will think I don't mourn at all. Ah, I have it!"

She drew forth a heavy purple silk, trimmed with folds of crape, donned a black velvet cloak over it, a purple velvet bonnet, and the usual accessories of a wealthy woman's toilet, and then descended to her carriage, which was in waiting by her command.

"It's lucky Jerry's gone off with some of the things," she thought, as she entered her carriage. "And now to try my last hope. If I succeed, I shall

never return to this house, nor see Stropes again. If I fail!" and she compressed her lips and breathed hurriedly, "then I must bid adieu to society, and all I have so long striven for. I must succeed!" she added, desperately. "I will succeed!"

(To be continued.)

FAREWELL TO SUMMER.

So soon! so soon must ye pass away,
Ye beautiful summer hours?
Can ye not linger yet awhile,
With your sunshine and your flowers?
The birds have bidden my bower adieu,
That were wont to cheer my heart;
Oh! how shall I bear its sadness when
The sunshine and flowers depart?

Oh! smile yet again on my trysting place,
In the valley beside the stream!
Where oft I have listened to his vows,
And revelled in love's first dream.

And ye must pass from my haunts away,
With much I have loved so dear;
As I bid ye a lingering sad farewell,
With many a sigh and tear.

Oh! how have ye passed with me, bright hours,
In dreams and smiles and tears
Ah! sad is the record ye bear of me
As ye join the by-gone years.
Farewell! farewell! and a sad, sad sigh
For the joys that with thee go;
And a tear for the heart's fond hopes and trust
Which ye have seen laid low.

D. M.

WOMAN AND HER MASTER.

By J. F. SMITH, Esq.

Author of "The Jesuit," "The Prelate," "Minnigrey," &c.

CHAPTER CX.

FRED was about to open his purse, when Mr. Stanley interfered, and cautioned him.

"If you value your life," he said, "do not let these wretches know that you have a coin in your possession: they would murder you for the chance of a doubloon."

"I don't think we should be so easily murdered—eh, Dick?" said the Lieutenant.

The latter replied by a smile of confidence.

"What do they say?" demanded the spokesman of the prisoners.

"That their purses were left with the governor," said their new friend, answering for them.

There was a murmur of disappointment: one or two doubted the truth of the statement; the others thought it—judging from their own experience—likely enough.

"Well!" exclaimed a tall Mexican—the leader of the party—"since you have no money to pay for your introduction into the society of caballeros and gentlemen, you might at least have the manners to invite them to drink with you."

With these words, he unceremoniously filled himself a glass of wine, which he partially emptied, and dashed the rest in the face of Dick, whose blood was up in an instant. He had not understood the words, but there was no mistaking the action.

The moment after the outrage, the aggressor measured his length upon the floor of the prison.

There was a general feeling of surprise—the Mexican being a tall, powerful fellow, in the full prime of manhood. Hitherto he had been the tyrant of the place, and some few were secretly pleased at the well-merited punishment he had received.

He recovered his feet in an instant, and a long knife glittered in his right hand, whilst he carefully enveloped his left in the folds of his sash; but before he could assume the offensive, a succession of well-planted blows had sent him to measure his length again upon the floor.

There was a murmur of mingled surprise and admiration amongst the wretches at seeing their companion, who was known to be most expert in the use of the knife, defeated and beaten by an unarmed youth, who had only his fists to defend himself with.

One or two of the prisoners explained the matter, by pronouncing the word "Inglesi!"

During the encounter, Fred had not been an idle spectator. He had armed himself with a fragment of the broken bench upon which they had been sitting, and kept more than one of the ruffian's companions at bay.

The loud curses and cries of the prisoners had fortunately been overheard by the gaolers, several of whom entered, followed by a party of the guard. In the babel of languages which ensued, the two Englishmen had but a poor chance of being heard or understood. The Spaniards and Mexicans accused them as

the sole authors of the fray. At last—not, however, without considerable difficulty—Fred contrived to edge in a few words. He briefly stated the circumstances as they occurred, and appealed to Mr. Stanley as a witness of the truth of his statement.

"Ay, ay!" said the head gaoler; "let us hear what the hermit"—the name the unfortunate prisoner was generally known by in the prison—"has to say! We can believe him."

To the astonishment no less than to the indignation of the young men, the aged captive gave it against them, laying the blame of the disturbance at their door.

The rest of the prisoners heard his testimony with a shout of triumph.

The consequence was, that the guard was ordered to remove Dick and Fred to one of those remote cells, where offenders were detained in *carcere duro*. In vain they protested against the decision. Even the Mexican, who had originated the fray, pleaded for them. The guard waived.

"Take them away!" exclaimed Mr. Stanley, with affected indignation. "Take them away—there will be neither peace nor quiet till they are gone."

Despite their remonstrances, the friends were removed to a solitary cell, without either fire or lamp. The gaolers thrust them in, and, drawing the massive bolts, left them to their reflections—which for the first few minutes were bitter enough against their countrymen.

"The sentimental old rascal!" exclaimed Dick.

"To side with such wretches!" added Fred.

"After all our kindness, too!" continued the former. "By heavens, I never felt more deceived or disappointed in my life. I began to feel a deep interest in the man—half made up my mind to interest my father in his favour—but now he may rot where he is."

"Quite right, Dick!"

"Die, for aught I care!"

"Right again!" added Fred, in a tone not quite so decided as the first—for passion had resigned the reins to reason, and he began to suspect that possibly Mr. Stanley's conduct was not quite so base as they imagined it had been. "Dick," he resumed, "after all, we may be mistaken."

"How, mistaken?" petulantly demanded his friend, whose blood was not quite so cool as the lieutenant's. "It is no mistake that we have been removed from a room where we had light, fire, and society, to this cold, damp, dark cell—and all through him."

"It has one advantage, at least!" observed Fred.

"Advantage! Pretty advantage."

"We are safe here, Dick! I fear we have judged the poor old man like two petulant boys! Did you mark how earnestly the ruffian who insulted you pleaded with the guard to allow you to remain?"

"Yes!" answered the young man, thoughtfully; "he did do that."

"And do you remember what Mr. Stanley said," continued Fred, "when I was about to open my purse? 'For heaven's sake do not let these wretches know that you have a coin in your possession—they would murder you for the chance of a doubloon!' Rely upon it," he added, "his motive was a kind one. We have condemned him too hastily."

Dick at last thought so, too; and it was finally settled between them that, before quitting the prison, Mr. Stanley should have a chance of explaining himself—and if found worthy of their sympathy and protection, the original design of interesting Captain Vernon in his favour should be carried out.

At an early hour the following morning there was great preparation on board the *Revenge*. The officers were in full dress, and a guard of marines was drawn up close to the gangway; the commander had not yet left his cabin. At last a gun was heard from the grand battery: it was instantly replied to by the heavy cannon of the ship, and before the echoes had died away, Captain Vernon appeared upon the quarter-deck. Like his officers, he was in full uniform—evidently to receive some distinguished guest—but his countenance was sombre and thoughtful.

"He means mischief!" whispered Jack Breeze to one of his comrades! "I should like to hear the round volley with which he will greet the governor and alcade the instant they set foot on the deck of the *Revenge*!"

"I know what I'd do!" observed an old gunner, as he deliberately turned his quid; "that is, if as how I was commander of the ship!"

"What, Bill?" demanded several of the crew—for all felt a deep interest in the proceedings of the day—upon which, perhaps, depended the liberty of their two favourite officers.

"Clap both the dons in irons till the lieutenant and Mr. Richard was safe on board, and then dismiss them with a round dozen each."

By this time one of those light, graceful boats in which the merchants and idlers of the place are in the habit of enjoying the delicious evenings upon the water,

rowed alongside the vessel. A tall, military-looking man and two ladies were received, as they stepped on deck, by the captain.

"That's the consul," observed Jack.

"And are those his daughters?" inquired the gunner, directing a look of admiration to the two fair girls who accompanied him.

"I guess they are!" was the reply; "at least they are English."

"How do you know?"

"By the way they mix their grog," replied the young sailor; "to say nothing of their lingo. Spanish women would have offered a poor fellow a glass of sugar-and-water, or sick-like stuff; but they—heaven bless them—have more natural and Christian-like feelings, and knows what grog ought to be."

Our readers have not forgotten that, when surprised by the guard, Dick's last words to the speaker were to inform the English consul what had taken place; hence his experience of Miss Hamilton's and her friend's talent in preparing his favourite beverage. The young ladies had a thousand questions to ask, and, with the tact of their sex, knew the key to a sailor's confidence.

Captain Vernon retired with his visitors to his cabin, to have some private conversation before the arrival of his other guests, whose barge had already left the strand: it contained two no less important personages than the military governor of Rio and the rascally alcade, who came to return the official visit which the commander of the *Revenge* had paid them the previous day.

Captain Vernon, surrounded by the officers of his ship, received them at the gangway. The guard presented arms, whilst the band played the national anthem. The gallant sailor extended his hand cordially to the governor, but bowed coolly to his companion, who appeared not a little surprised and uneasy at the distinction in the manner of receiving them.

"This is the old land-skark!" muttered Jack, between his teeth; "see, the skipper refuses his fin."

"He looks uncommon gallant," observed another of the men. "I don't think he half likes it."

Jack Breeze felt satisfied that if he was any judge of Captain Vernon's character and spirit, the bilious-looking don would like it much less presently.

"Really a noble vessel!" said the governor of Rio, as he stepped upon the quarter-deck; "you must feel proud to command her."

"Proud and honoured!"

"How is she named?" hurriedly inquired the alcade, who felt the awkwardness of keeping silence.

"The *Revenge*," was the brief answer to his query.

The rascally old don looked even more bilious and uncomfortable than before, and secretly wished himself safe again in the government-house, or his own villa in Rio.

With stately courtesy their host invited the governor to follow him to the cabin, where he said he had more guests to introduce to him—ladies. At the word "ladies," the alcade felt his heart sink within him: he guessed whom he should meet there—and was not mistaken. The first persons he recognized on entering were the English consul, looking diplomatically indignant—his pretty daughter, with her roguish, laughing eyes—and, worse than all, his outraged niece—Miss Hamilton. Decidedly, the terrible alcade of Rio felt anything but comfortable at that moment.

CHAPTER CXL

Muse not that I thus suddenly proceed;

For what I will I will—and there's an end.

Shakespeare.

"THE English consul," exclaimed the governor of Rio, at the same time frankly extending his hand.

"Colonel Fitzgerald, at your service," replied the gentleman, cordially shaking it, for the speaker was a man of honour and a gentleman.

The officer looked at him with surprise.

"I have struck my flag," continued the speaker, "in consequence of an outrage against the peace of my family and the dignity of my office."

"In Rio?"

"In Rio, your excellency," answered the colonel.

"A young lady—my ward, and an English subject—was forcibly carried off last night from the consular residence. The offence," he added, "was not the less serious that, thanks to the gallantry of two young gentlemen, she has been restored to me."

"Have you not been too hasty?" inquired Don Cesar de Rivaldo—the name of the governor; "excuse the bluntness of the question—but I still must address you with the freedom of an old friend. Government cannot be held responsible for the crimes of individuals. Had you but made the circumstance known to me, the perpetrator should have been amply punished for his insolence."

"Permit me to observe," said the consul, "that it is your excellency's power to punish him I doubt—not the inclination."

The governor looked even more surprised. He could not comprehend who the individual could be whom his authority was impotent to reach. Like most Spaniards placed in an embarrassing position, he took refuge in his dignity, and remained silent.

"I am certain you will agree with me," continued the guardian of Miss Hamilton, "when I inform you that the outrage I complain of was perpetrated by no less a personage than the first civil magistrate of the city—your colleague, the alcade."

Don Cesar darted a look of indignation at his companion, who began to regret bitterly that he had ever set foot on board the *Revenge*.

"You forget, colonel," he observed, in an apologetic tone, "that although you are the guardian of the young lady, I am her uncle, and naturally claim a voice in the disposal of her."

"Not without her own consent."

The magistrate shrugged his shoulders, and muttered something about his affections and feelings.

Miss Fitzgerald could no longer restrain her indignation; the idea of her friend being *disposed of* like a bale of merchandise shocked her ideas of the rights and privileges of her sex.

"A convent," she exclaimed, "is a pretty way of disposing of your niece. And as for your affection, senor, we all know that it extends to her fortune rather than person."

"I am sure," said the old man, "a convent is a very happy place."

"Very," answered the daughter of the consul, drily, who recollected that she had been several years at school in one.

"And a safe retreat," continued the alcade, "for those who lack discretion to govern themselves. I would advise my good friend the consul," he added, with a satirical smile, "to satisfy himself of the truth of my description by visiting one."

The hint was too palpable to be mistaken. Mary blushed deeply, and her distress naturally aroused the anger of her father, who was on the point of retorting, when his ward interposed.

"Do not—pray do not, my dear, kind guardian—quarrel with my uncle on my account. I forgive him his unkindness and persecution—the pain and terror he has caused me—and Mary will forgive him, too—for my sake."

"He has more forgiveness than mine to ask," replied the young lady. "My father's—for the insult offered to the consular flag—and Captain Vernon's," she added, maliciously, "for having arrested two of his officers and consigned them to a felon's prison."

Hitherto the conversation had been conducted in French; by a few angry words which passed in an under tone, in Spanish, between the governor and his colleague, the latter discovered, to his dismay, that the two young men he had so arbitrarily arrested were British officers, and one of them the son of the commander of the *Revenge*. He recollected certain orders which, in the blindness of his fury, he had given, and began to feel a nervous impatience to return on shore.

Don Cesar expressed, in the handsomest manner, both to the consul and the captain of the man-of-war, his regret at the conduct of the alcade, and added that, the instant he returned to Rio, the gentlemen should be set at liberty.

"That, of course," coolly observed the commander of the *Revenge*, "is the first and most necessary step to the adjustment of this unpleasant affair. Your excellency can depart from my ship whenever you please; both the colonel and myself fully acquit you of any participation in the outrage offered to this young lady and the officers under my command."

The governor bowed stiffly; he did not exactly comprehend the permission given to quit the ship, and mentally asked himself whether, under any circumstances, the speaker would have dared to prevent him—a proof that he did not know Captain Vernon.

"Yes—yes," hastily exclaimed the alcade; "let us be gone—we have intruded too long upon the hospitality of the worthy captain."

"You will intrude upon it, I fear, for some hours longer," replied the last-mentioned personage, with marked emphasis.

Don José began to look, as well as feel, exceedingly uncomfortable, and cast uneasy glances at his colleague.

Miss Hamilton fixed her eyes imploringly upon those of Captain Vernon: the gallant sailor saw in an instant that she wished to speak with him, and advanced to the window of the cabin, where she and Mary Fitzgerald were seated.

"Pray do not suffer my uncle to depart," she whispered, "till your son—my two defenders," she added, correcting herself, and at the same time blushing deeply,—"are safe on board your vessel. You have no idea how powerful their enemy is. His will is law in the prisons of Rio. Once there, even the authority of the governor must give way to his. I have heard him boast so a hundred times!"

"And he is no less revengeful than wicked," said her friend, who had not either forgotten or forgiven the ungallant speech of the den. "The old wretch is capable of any crime, to gratify either his avarice or his hate. Only think of those two dear—poor fellows, I mean—shut up in a filthy prison in Rio! Fortunately their goaler is in your hands; terrify him, and you may do as you please with him."

"You have but anticipated my purpose," replied the commander of the *Revenge*, with a smile—for the advice of the spirited girl pointed out the exact line of conduct he had decided to follow. "As long as my ship remains without its officers, exactly so long must the city mourn the absence of its magistrate!"

During the above conversation, the alcade had been on thorns: his conscience suggested that he was the subject of it. When, therefore, the governor rose to depart, he instantly declared that he was ready.

"You will do me the honour of remaining on board," said the captain, "till the return of my son and his friend."

"On board!" faltered the magistrate; "impossible! I shall be waited for at the town-house. I have audiences to give—disputes to settle! Besides," he added, deeming his last argument conclusive, "they will never release the prisoners in my absence."

"The governor can bear your order."

"But it is informal—contrary to usage, and—"

His remonstrance was cut short, by the commander declaring, in a peremptory tone, that till the two friends were safe on the quarter-deck of their ship, he must remain where he was.

"I am to consider myself a prisoner, then?" said the old man, pale with passion as well as fear; "I, the chief magistrate of Rio! You exceed your authority, and may repent this violence!"

The sailor turned upon his heel, and, bowing politely to the governor, intimated that he was ready to attend his excellency to his barge.

"For heaven's sake, send the two young scamps off directly!" exclaimed the terrified alcade, as he placed the order for the release of Dick and Fred in the hands of his colleague; "and make all possible speed, my dear Don Cesar! If anything should have happened to them, there is no knowing to what dreadful extremities this wretched Englishman might proceed!"

"Most probably he would hang you to the yard-arm of his ship!" was the consoling observation of his friend.

"Hang me! the alcade—the chief magistrate of Rio! Good heavens! How can you imagine for an instant such a distressing, improbable thing?"

His excellency the governor replied only by a satirical smile: in his heart he was not sorry for the dilemma in which Don José had placed himself—for they hated each other cordially.

Anxiously and heavily did the hours pass with Don José. His niece and Mary Fitzgerald conversed in mysterious whispers, without taking the least notice of him; and the offended colonel maintained a diplomatic silence, suited to his outraged dignity.

Finding his position insupportable, he attempted to quit the cabin, with the intention of walking on deck, and watching the arrival of the prisoners.

"Can't pass!" said the marine who was on guard. "Dear me—dear me!" exclaimed the old man, wringing his hands. "What does he mean?"

"Back!" continued the sentinel, at the same time bringing his piece most suspiciously in a line with the magistrate's body.

If the alcade did not understand the words, he perfectly comprehended the action of the man, and silently retreated to his former seat in the cabin, where he gave himself up to bitter reflections on his folly in having ventured on board the *Revenge*.

The fact of the British consul having lowered his flag, and gone on board a ship of war, created a great sensation in the city. His brother consuls felt the outrage which had been offered him as an insult to the consular body, and came off in their respective barges, with the flags of their several nations flying at the bows, to pay him an official visit, and assure him of their sympathy.

It was a proud moment—a very proud moment—for Colonel Fitzgerald, when the commercial representatives of France, America, Russia, Sweden, and Holland assembled round him in the cabin of the *Revenge*.

"You are right—ver right, *mon chère collègue*!" exclaimed a dapper little personage, with the ribbon of the Legion of Honour in his button-hole, who represented the consular dignity of France; "do old racial of alcade to run away wd our beautiful Miss Hamilton! *Foi de gentilhomme*! he deserve to hang for it!"

The consul of Russia declared that the knout was the only fitting punishment for such an offence; whilst his brother of America more mercifully suggested that a good cowhiding would be sufficient, and concluded by an emphatic declaration that he should like to administer it himself.

All this was very unpleasant for Don José, who sat unnoticed in a corner of the cabin.

A statement of the outrage of which he had been guilty was drawn up, to be forwarded to the Minister of Foreign Affairs; it was accompanied by a demand for his dismissal from the office he had disgraced, signed by all the consuls.

Captain Vernon was doing the honours of his vessel to his guests, when a loud cheer from the men announced the return of Dick and Fred: he affected not to hear—but the sound removed a fearful weight from his heart.

The young ladies looked at him inquiringly—but he never moved a muscle of his bronzed, handsome, features.

"They have returned!" said Miss Hamilton, in an under-tone, at the same time blushing deeply; "I am sure they have!"

"They?" replied the commander. "Who?"

"Affection, Captain Vernon!" exclaimed Mary Fitzgerald; "I accuse you of downright affection! They?—who? When should we mean but your son and his friend? Why don't they come?" she added, with that look of pouting impatience which is so resistless with a pretty woman; "do they think we have no feeling—no gratitude, I mean?"

By this time our readers will begin to suspect that the young ladies possessed not only very grateful but very warm feelings.

"Shall I inquire if Lieutenant Vernon and his cousin have returned?"

"If you expect to be forgiven!" said the consul's daughter.

As soon as the rescued prisoners had donned their uniforms, they presented themselves in the cabin: the commander received them as he would any other two officers who reported themselves on board.

"Glad to see you, gentlemen!" he said, with a friendly nod. "Fresh glasses, steward, and seats!"

The young men were perfectly satisfied with their reception—they knew him; not so the young ladies, who felt that they ought to have been received in triumph—with joy—in short, they knew as little of the discipline of a man-of-war as a sailor does of the etiquette observed in courts. Mary Fitzgerald began to think the captain a cruel, unfeeling man.

By some extraordinary arrangement—but girls know how to manage these things—Dick found a vacant seat next to Miss Hamilton, and Fred one by the side of her friend.

"I cannot tell you how happy I am to see you again!" said the first-named lady; "we have passed a fearful night of anxiety and suspense! I shall never be able," she added, with charming frankness, "to pay my debt of gratitude to my deliverer!"

Dick began to suspect that the fair girl might very easily pay it.

"Sailors are but poor hands at compliments," he replied. "Pray do not allude to it as a *debt of gratitude* again. I regard it as the happiest event of my life, Miss Hamilton; let me not feel," he added, "that it has cast a shade on yours."

It had cast a shade—one of those dreams, so fine and delicate that at first we feel not their presence, though gradually they absorb our whole existence.

On rising from the table, Captain Vernon and his guests repaired to the ward-room, whither the alcade had been removed. A mingled expression of satisfaction and hate passed over his thin features as he recognized the two officers.

"The boat is manned," said the commander of the *Revenge*; "you are at liberty to depart."

Don José rose sullenly from his seat.

"The safe return of my officers," continued the speaker, "removes your punishment from my hands; the dispute between you and the consul must be settled elsewhere: for the outrage offered to his ward, you must answer to your own government—not to me."

"It will be answered, Captain Vernon," said the old man, bitterly; "though not, perhaps, in the way you expect."

Bowing haughtily, he quitted the ward-room, accompanied by one of the officers, who was directed to see him from the ship.

"Thank heaven he is gone," exclaimed Mary Fitzgerald, as from the window of the cabin she saw the boat rowing towards the shore; "it is so unpleasant to hate anyone. I trust, my dear, we shall never see him again."

Miss Hamilton silently echoed the wish.

Like most cruel and unprincipled persons, the chief magistrate of Rio was neither constitutionally nor morally brave. The spirited conduct of the consul, in striking his flag—the representation of his colleagues, coupled with the presence of a British ship-of-war—warned the don that he had placed himself in a false position; and, galling as it was to his pride, he resolved to take the only step by which he could extricate himself from it.

At noon, the following day, dressed in his robes of

office, he repaired on board the *Revenge*, and, in the presence of the commander and the consuls of the different nations, tendered a formal apology for the outrage offered to the consular dignity.

Colonel Fitzgerald was compelled to own himself satisfied; in fact, the alcade having done all that diplomatic etiquette required, he could not officially feel otherwise. Not so his daughter or her friend: they were so delighted with their visit to the gallant ship that they would willingly have prolonged their stay on board.

That same evening the flag of England once more floated at the consular residence; and as its broad folds streamed proudly in the air, not only the batteries of the city, but the ships in the harbour saluted it.

"So ends our first cruise," observed Mary Fitzgerald, when she once more found herself and companion in her own tastefully-arranged boudoir at home.

"Yes," said her friend, with a sigh. "How wretchedly dull everything appears," continued the first speaker, "after the bustle and activity on board ship. By-the-bye, Lucy, dear," she added in an arch tone, "how would you like to be a sailor's wife?"

"I the wife of a sailor!" exclaimed Miss Hamilton, trying to look very unembarrassed; "what could put such an idea into your head?"

"It came of itself!"

"So unlikely a thing—so absurd—so ridiculous!"

"Very!" answered her friend, drily; "but absurd and unlikely things do happen! For my part, I should like it, of all things!"

"You would?"

"Yes," replied the saucy girl, with a joyous laugh; "and the frankness with which I own it is a proof that I am not in love with one! Ah, Lucy," she added, "you may deceive yourself; play at hide-and-seek with your own heart—but not with me! Your uncle will find another bar to his precious scheme of getting you into a convent—and not the least formidable one!"

"Mary—Mary!" interrupted the blushing girl, "is it possible that you should think me so weak?"

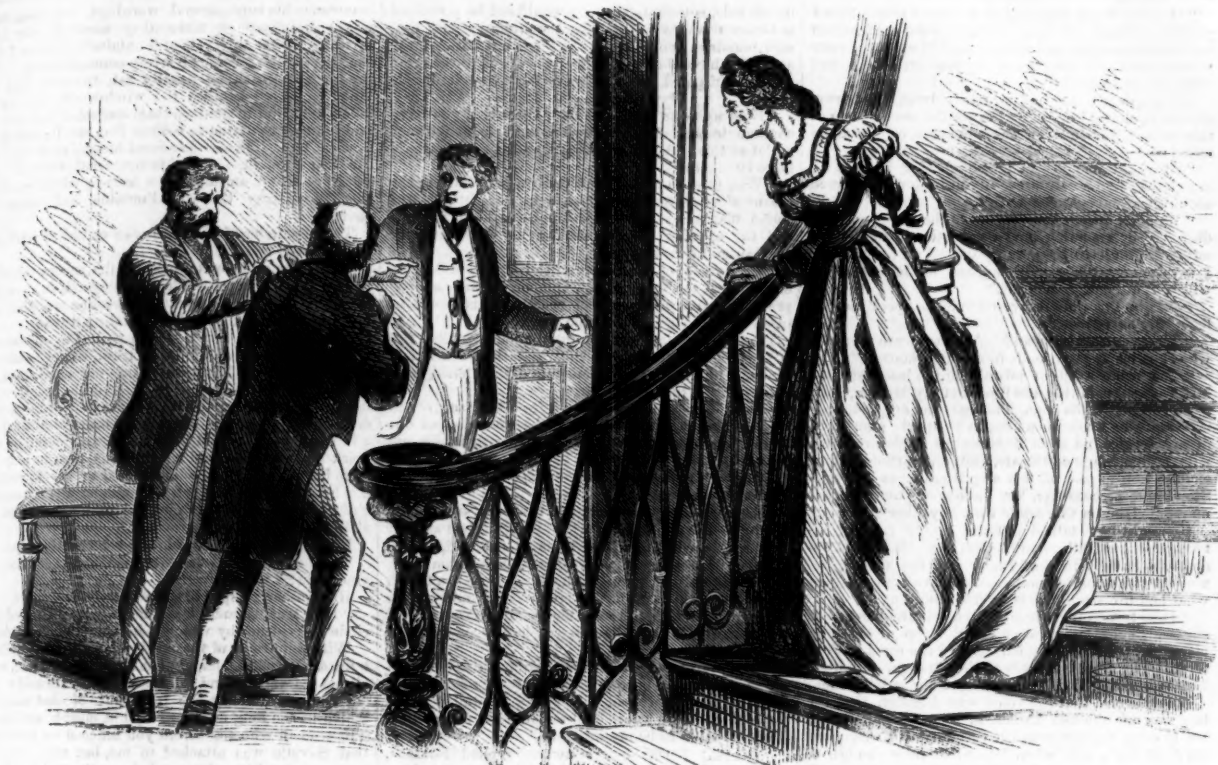
"I judge you by myself!" was the reply; "we have both grateful hearts! If a fine young fellow had rescued me from the clutches of a tyrannical old uncle—suffered imprisonment, and heaven knows what horrors, on my account—I should adore him!"

"Is it possible?" exclaimed the heiress, in the prettiest tone of astonishment imaginable.

"Ask your own heart, Lucy!" whispered the merry girl, as she kissed her friend and bade her "good night;" "that will answer you!"

(To be continued.)

TOBACCO.—Next, perhaps to cocoa, in its power of replacing ordinary food, we must reckon tobacco. The power of this substance, to compensate to a certain extent the want of food, is very well known; but, strangely enough, it is generally assumed that this property is dependent upon its power to disgust the appetite by prostrating the nervous power of the stomach. A very little reflection should be sufficient to entirely discountenance such a view. There are very many substances capable of destroying appetite, by a depressing influence upon the nervous system; such, for instance, as the salts of antimony, or the preparations of ipecacuanha; yet no one will pretend that the actions of any such drugs would relieve the sense of faintness caused by fatigue endured in the absence of food—an effect which tobacco undoubtedly produces in those persons with whose system it agrees. The experienced sportsman, accustomed to tramp long hours over the heather in search of game, would laugh at such an explanation of the effect of his favourite "cutty;" he knows very well that it is by no more disgusting of his appetite that he comforts himself for the indefinite removal of the prospect of dinner. By the time he had succeeded in depressing his stomach to the level of indifference to food, he would have rendered himself incapable for continued strenuous exertion, were tobacco only effective in this way. That tobacco is not an exact equivalent for roast beef, nobody knows better than the smoker; at the same time it would be impossible to persuade any one, who had practical experience of the use of it, to believe that its only effect is to depress nervous power. The fact is, that all such statements are made on the authority of persons either practically ignorant of the effects of smoking, or else naturally incapable, as some are, of deriving benefit from it. There are a few people whom no amount of care and skill exercised in the taking of tobacco, nor any moderation in the dose used, can save from unmistakable poisoning, whenever they indulge in it. These cases are rare; and they ought to be carefully separated from the evil results which are produced by mere unskillfulness in smoking, such as causes the troubles of beginners in the art.—*Stimulants and Narcotics*. By Francis E. Anstie, M.D., M.R.C.P.



[THE SENORA WITNESSES THE DOWNFALL OF HER ACCOMPLICE.]

THE FATAL SECRET.

CHAPTER XLII.

How shall we hold footing
Beneath this tempest, which collects itself
And threatens us from all quarters?

Schiller.

THE Vale was in a state of joyful excitement. Fanny was to be married during the coming summer to Dr. Delamere, a young physician with whom she had met in Scarborough; he was preparing to visit Paris for the completion of his medical studies, and desired to take his bride with him.

As both parties had sufficient fortune to render the medical practice a matter of secondary importance, Fanny's consent was obtained to an early marriage; and to render her happiness complete, her early friend and her darling brother were expected to arrive in time to be present at the ceremony.

Little intercourse was now kept up between the Vale and Fontaines.

Philip Vane had become bitterly incensed against Mr. Berkeley for employing a clever lawyer to interpose some of the law's delays in the way of the disposal of the property; and an order of court had been obtained, prohibiting the removal of Fontaine from his own domicile till a commission of lunacy sat on his case, and decided that it was unsafe to keep him there without restraint.

As he betrayed no violence, and was only melancholy mad, Philip found himself checkmated on that move.

With every passing day he was becoming more restless, and anxious to escape to a foreign land. When there, he would rid himself of his two confederates; and, with Savella, seek such happiness as gold, won as this would be, could purchase.

Mr. Berkeley had been appointed commissioner, on the part of Fontaine, to settle the estate, and Philip chafed at the delay he constantly threw in his way. His object was to gain time, that George might bring the mysterious stranger on the stage of action, who pledged himself to save Claude Fontaine's fortune for him; and in the meantime a strict watch was kept on Somerset and the senora, who remained blissfully unconscious of the storm that was approaching.

A telegram at length came to Mr. Berkeley, announcing the arrival of his son and his bride in Liverpool, and that afternoon the carriage was sent to the station to meet them.

A few hours later, Isola sprang up the steps of the well-known piazza, and was nearly smothered by the

caresses that were showered upon her. George, too, had his full share, and the tall stranger who had accompanied them looked on smilingly.

Miss Carleton's eyes fell upon him, and she started and changed colour.

Their glances met; and in spite of his efforts to maintain his *incognito*, a look of old acquaintance beamed from Fontaine's. She drew near him, and softly said:

"You are Henry Fontaine—I have suspected your identity with Baron Fontani."

He rapidly replied:

"Yes; your penetration has not deceived you. I have returned to save my poor Claude—to assure him that I forgive the past. We have both been to blame—I almost as much as he; but George will tell you all you wish to know. To-night I must maintain my *incognito*, that to-morrow I may fall as a crushing avalanche on the wretches who have nearly destroyed my brother."

The two were swept away in the joyful crowd, and the party sat down to supper. That night a private interview took place between the gentlemen, in which Fontaine explained his position, and the motives for his long concealment of his existence.

A messenger was dispatched to Fontaines to inform Mr. Vane that at eleven o'clock on the following morning Mr. Berkeley would be ready to complete the formalities which would transfer the estate to its new purchaser.

The servant from the Vale carried the astounding news that Mr. George had come back, bringing with him Miss Isola as his bride. When Philip heard this, it was noticeable that he seemed as much stunned by it as his two accomplices. The three held a hasty conference, and decided that they could not too soon get out of England with their booty.

Everything had been arranged for a speedy departure; and after the business of the next morning was completed, it was their purpose to embark for Italy as soon as the notes given for the property could be converted into money.

Philip spent a restless and wretched night, cursing his own blindness, and wishing that he had never seen Savella; for now he knew who Isola really was, and he almost hated George for consoling her for his own desertion. But for his mercenary heart, he might now have been the happy husband of the lawful heiress of the wealth he had sacrificed everything that is dear to an honourable man to gain.

A few minutes before the hour named for the meeting, the party from the Vale rode into the yard and dismounted.

One among them was a stranger, who wore his hat pulled over his brows, and merely touched it as he was presented to Philip as Mr. Henry.

The senora was on the watch, and she was greatly surprised when she saw Mr. Berkeley take this person into the library, evidently with a view of seeing Mr. Fontaine.

Mr. Berkeley left him there, and followed the rest of the party to the drawing-room, where preparations had been made for their reception. The ornamental appendages had been removed from the centre-table, and it was now covered with papers, which Somerset made himself busy in looking over and arranging.

After some preliminary conversation, Philip said: "Gentlemen, we may as well finish this business at once, as I am naturally desirous to bring it to a close. You will now inform me who is to become the purchaser of this place; an absurd mystery has been made of that person, as if I should object to any one that could pay me the sum I ask."

"Philip Vane," said Mr. Berkeley, looking him steadily in the face, "are you perfectly certain that you possess the right to transfer this property to another? Do you believe that your wife is Henry Fontaine's daughter?"

Philip became livid; his pale lips gasped:

"What can you mean? Has not Mr. Fontaine himself recognized her as his niece?"

"Have you no knowledge of the deception that has been practised on a man too honourable himself to suspect the fraud of which I accuse Thomas Somerset and his wife, Bianca Rosselli?"

Philip sank back, white and nerveless; but Somerset confronted Mr. Berkeley without shrinking, and said:

"My credentials satisfied Mr. Fontaine, sir, and I fancy they will suffice to satisfy any jury that may be summoned to sit upon them. What new obstacle have you now to bring forward to retard the settlement of this business?"

"I shall call on Henry Fontaine himself to present them," said Mr. Berkeley, sternly. "He is now in the library, and I will summon him at once."

"Do," replied Somerset, with undaunted effrontery. "I suppose the person who came hither with you has undertaken to personate him; but it's rather late for such a trick as that."

A grasp of steel was laid upon his shoulder; and turning, the speaker beheld the face of his former master flashing upon him such unutterable scorn and indignation that made him feel as if a sudden doom had overtaken him.

"Demon!" said Fontani, in a tone of concentrated passion, "I have just been looking on your work. Send for your accomplice and confess the full extent of your villainy, or I will do justice on you even here, and with my own hand!"

Self-possessed as he ordinarily was, Somerton shrank in mortal fear before the terrible earnestness of this man. He made an effort to speak calmly as he asked:

"Of what crime do you accuse me, sir? Respect for my cloth should surely prevent you from making such an unwarrantable attack as this."

"Wretch! do you dare appeal to the garb you have disgraced by assuming it as a protection to such enormities as you have been guilty of? Call the women, I say; confront her with me, and let me see if you will both attempt to defy me."

Philip by this time recovered voice to speak, and he haughtily asked:

"What does this mean? And who are you, sir, who thus insult my friends in my own house?"

"You make a slight mistake in the last assertion, Mr. Vane; for, during the illness of my brother, I am master here. This man, Thomas Somers, was once my valet—he knew me as Baron Fontani; and, while in my service, he stole from me the miniature of my wife, my marriage certificate, and other articles which enabled him to pass off his stepdaughter as my child. Stop these proceedings, Mr. Vane; for your wife has no more claim on this estate than any other stranger."

He might have talked on much longer without interruption, for Philip had fainted. He was carried upstairs to Savella in that state; and the senora, de-voured with apprehension, rushed down to discover what had thrown him into such a condition.

As she turned the curve in the winding staircase, she saw Somerton in the powerful grasp of a strong man, dragged across the hall toward the room of Fontaine. The clear blue eyes of the stranger fell upon her, and he imperiously commanded her to join them.

A vague idea that the voice was familiar, that the face was one she had known in other days, impelled her to obey, though even her ruthless heart was quaking with fear; and when she came near enough to read the expression of her ally's face, she saw that all was lost.

Somerton's audacity seemed to have completely deserted him, and he trembled and cowered before the strong will of him who held him in his iron grip.

A few whispered words from Fontani caused George Berkeley to spring up-stairs on an exploring visit to Somerton's apartment. Two servants were speedily summoned to his assistance, and several large boxes were taken down and placed near the door of Fontaine's room.

In the meantime the whole party had invaded that sanctuary in which grief and remorse had so long held him captive. In some perturbation, Fontaine arose to meet them. Without a moment's hesitation, his brother came forward and held out his hand, as if they had only parted yesterday.

"Claude, old fellow, how is it with you? Come, take my hand; don't fancy that I am not flesh and blood, for I am as real as your are."

Fontaine uttered a great cry, grasped his hand, and fell upon his neck, exclaiming:

"Oh, my brother—my living brother! The brand of Cain is lifted. Oh, God! I thank thee for all thy mercies!"

The shock, in place of unnerving him, seemed to have restored to him all his old energy. He stood erect, and asked:

"What has that man done, Henry, that you grasp him thus? Has he kept us apart so long—so long?"

"He has done worse than that, Claude. He is the fiend who has tampered with your reason and produced the delusion that is destroying you. He is a juggler, a ventriloquist; and his was the voice that has so long haunted you, his the skill that made an inferno of your house."

The spell that had so long chained the faculties of Fontaine seemed broken by this revelation. He looked around with all his old fire.

"Can this be proved?" he asked.

"Here are the proofs," said a voice at the door. "In these boxes you will find the implements he has used."

The boxes were quickly opened. In the largest one was an ingenious apparatus for producing the sounds which had so often made night hideous under that roof. In a smaller one was an immense magic lantern, beneath which lay the picture representing the scene of Henry Fontaine's death.

A case containing a small electric battery was next brought to light, and a medicine chest, filled with vials, which Dr. Sinclair arrived just in time to examine and pronounce poisons of the most deadly character, placed side by side with their antidotes.

While this examination was taking place, Somerton was securely bound and placed upon a seat. The senora, with looks of hate and defiance, remained

by his side, conscious that she would not be permitted to escape if she were to make the attempt. All that now remained was to brave the scene out with all the audacity she could command.

She whispered to the shivering wretch beside her:

"Hold up your head, and show them that you have courage to bear defeat, as well as skill to weave such a plot as this. A few more days, and the game would have been ours."

"Why refer to that?" he bitterly asked, "when the labour of years has been crushed in one fatal hour? Curse that man; I wish I had poisoned him when I had the chance; then he could never have done me such an evil turn as this."

The proofs of Somerton's sleight-of-hand were brought in, the doors closed and locked, and an impromptu court organized, of which Fontani constituted himself both accuser and judge.

Fontaine was in a state of great excitement, but full of joy and thankfulness at the revelation which had snatched him from despondency and threatened madness, to light, life, and hope.

He could not remove his eyes from the face of his brother; and it was evident that the aroused mind was following all that was said and done, with intelligent comprehension.

The judge addressed the two who were arraigned as criminals before him:

"You are both to understand that you are on trial for life and death, before a tribunal as ruthless as your own hearts. If the whole truth is not told, I will have no mercy upon you. I will hand you over, without hesitation, to the authorities, to be dealt with according to the law of the land. Your only chance of escape is to appeal to my mercy by making a full confession of all the villainies you have been guilty of in this house."

"And who gave you such authority as this?" asked the senora, with a sneer. "How dare you thus speak to the sister of your dead wife, Henry Fontaine? That connection shall protect both me and this man, whom I acknowledge to be my husband."

"Of that I was before aware," replied Fontani, coolly; and he drew from his pocket a paper, from which he read the history of Somerton and his wife, as he had gathered it in Italy. The record was brief; but it was sufficiently infamous to condemn them both to the severest punishment, without any additional charges.

Somerton seemed completely crushed—such courage as he possessed had utterly deserted him; and when the terrible voice of his accuser ceased, he faintly said:

"Mercy—mercy! Only let me go free, and I will confess all."

The senora would still have resisted, and she uttered many biting sarcasms on his want of manliness, but Fontani sternly silenced her by assuring her that the connection between them should prove no protection to her if she refused to win mercy on the terms he had offered.

Somerton, in a low, faltering voice, gave the history of the plot to rob Fontaine, from its first inception down to the present day. He stated that it had first suggested itself to him while in the service of his brother. He pried into everything, read his master's old letters, and gathered from them the facts of his past history. He also learned that the sister of his deceased wife was living near Rome; that she was a widow with a young child, near the age of the one that was supposed to have been lost with her mother. In the possibility that the articles he had stolen might be of use to him, he took them with him when he left Fontani's service.

As soon as possible he made his way to Italy, found Senora Roselli in narrow circumstances, but not absolutely poor. He soon gained her confidence, and induced her to join with him, heart and hand, in the plot to secure future wealth to the long-neglected child who had hitherto been considered only as an incumbrance.

Savella was too young to remember the change thus made in her position. She was taught to call her mother "Aunt;" and eight years spent in England enabled Somerton and his wife to bring her forward, on their return, to Rome as the daughter of Henry Fontaine. No one questioned the validity of her claim to his fortune; and when her stepfather applied to a few men of good position for letters of introduction to responsible persons in England, they were readily given; for the writers believed his object was to reinstate an orphan child in her just rights.

Somerton then accurately traced the causes of the diablerie practised since he had been under that roof, and explained the warning Fontaine had received before his arrival in a very simple manner. He stated that he had availed himself of the excuse of visiting an old friend, to make a flying trip to the neighbourhood of Fontaine, that he might find out all it might be expedient for him to know concerning the family before he entered it. He considered it best then to

commence his supernatural warnings, that suspicion might be dissipated when they occurred after his arrival. In the intervals of Fontaine's absence from the library he arranged wires communicating with the table at which he usually sat, the other end of which projected beneath the window-sill, and could be used by him to produce that magnetic thrill which had induced Fontaine to believe that his brother had touched him. He also possessed himself of the key of the iron safe, in one of his nocturnal visits to his room; and took an impression from it, which enabled him to destroy the will Fontaine had concealed there.

The remainder of the confession embodied what has already been related.

While Somerton was speaking, the senora sat with hard eyes and compressed lips, looking as if on vacancy; though at moments a scornful expression wrinkled her lips. When he had finished, she abruptly said:

"Since nothing is now to be gained by silence on my part, I will speak the whole truth, Henry Fontaine. You will then see I had mercy on your child, hard as you think me; therefore, you should have mercy on me and mine. I could withhold the knowledge of this crime; but since confession is the order of the day, I will not. I discovered Isola to be your child by the mark upon her shoulder; she was then in a dying state from drugs I had administered to her to remove her from my path. When I found she was my sister's child, I could not let her die; and my husband used his skill to save her life."

Fontaine started forward, and vehemently asked:

"What is this? Isola!—Henry's child? What can you mean?"

His brother grasped his hand firmly, and said:

"It is true, Claude; and he rapidly unfolded the chain of evidence by which it became known to him.

With a murmur of thanksgiving upon his lips, Fontaine sank back a moment; but he presently arose, with all his old dignity and self-possession. He said:

"And now, Henry, the fatal cause of that mad act, which has so long darkened my life, must be explained. The woman who sits before you induced me to believe that Savella was attached to me, but that some entanglement with a former lover compelled her to be very cautious in her demonstrations of affection. Bianca brought me notes and messages which I know now must have been intended for you, confessing the most ardent affection for me. I was vain and foolish enough to believe it to be so; I became desperately enamoured of her, as you already know."

"One night, when I believed you to be at Tirol, Bianca came to me in a towering rage, and declared to me that, in spite of her sister's professions, she was now in a summer-house in the shrubbery with her former lover. I could come with her, and see for myself how much her pretended attachment was worth."

"I followed her, with jealous anger stirring in my heart; which was increased to frenzy when I looked into the moonlit alcove, saw my idol clasped to the breast of another man, and heard her say:

"Oh, my beloved, how can I live if separated from you?"

"Blind with rage, I rushed upon my rival and stabbed him, as I thought, to the heart; as your hot fell of the moonlight streamed upon your face, and I felt that I was a fratricide."

"I believed you died, and I fled from Rome in a state of mind which language may never describe. I believe I was deranged for months afterwards, though I had judgment enough left not to betray myself to strangers. I will not describe the years of darkness that followed; you can imagine them when you see to what they have brought me."

"And I, too, was hard, unfeeling, to leave this burden on you so long. But the iron is softened; my brother, and again my heart is human. We both have much to forgive."

Then turning to the senora, he sternly said:

"And now explain your share in this deception."

She looked him firmly in the face, and defiantly replied:

"Can you not guess the key to the riddle? I loved you myself. I would have given my sister to Claude, and wooed you to return my affection. I discovered your secret with Savella, and in the frenzy of the moment I called on him to kill the rival who held his beloved in his arms. He blindly obeyed me; but he was ignorant of who that rival was till he saw your face as you fell. That is all I have to say; and now do your worst. I do not fear you, for you will not dare to bring an ignominious punishment upon the sister of your wife. If you do, I will proclaim aloud the connection that exists between us, and the world shall know that the blood of the guilty felon flows in the veins of your daughter."

"That would not have saved you if you had not made a full and free confession. Having done that, my promise of mercy to you and your accomplice shall be kept. Now, I wish further to know what connection your daughter and her husband have had

with the fraud that has been attempted against my brother?"

"Savella has none; she believes herself to be the heiress of the estate. Mr. Vane thought her such when he married her."

"There is an evasion in your last words, and I—"

General Berkeley here leaned forward and hastily whispered a few words in the speaker's ear. Fontaine deliberated a moment, and then said:

"I am glad that your daughter is not implicated in this nefarious plot to rob a confiding and generous man. Her husband may have the benefit of a doubt as to his complicity in it since he married her; for we do not wish to be merciless in our investigations."

"I would not advise you to," sneered the signora; "people that live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones. You know your brother would have little chance to recover if his past was dragged before a jury. I am not afraid of anything a Fontaine can do to me."

Henry Fontaine regarded her a moment in silence. He seemed to be debating a question in his own mind; but he finally said:

"Although it seems wrong to unloose two such miscreants upon society, I cannot prevail on myself to mete out to you the punishment due to your crimes. I will send you both back to Italy at my own expense, on the condition that you, Bianca, relinquish all claim upon your daughter. She seems to be worthy of a better fate than to be linked with such as you are. She has married into a respectable family, and they will see that she is properly cared for."

Somerton here roused himself, and spoke: "I accept the terms for my wife and myself; but I claim indemnity for the expense incurred by me in bestowing a fine musical education on Savella. She may yet become rich through that, and the person to whom she owes it should not go unrewarded."

"Let Mrs. Vane settle that when her musical career has brought her the means to do so," replied Fontaine, drily. "I only consent to spare you; I shall not reward you for the failure of the villainy which may compel her to use her talents in such a manner."

He then pronounced the sentence:

"The prisoners will be removed to their respective apartments, and a strict watch kept over them till arrangements can be made to transfer them to the ship which will take them to Italy."

The doors were unlocked, the servants called in, and the commands of the temporary judge obeyed.

When this was done, Fontaine for the first time observed the presence of George Berkeley. His heart and mind had been so absorbed in the late scene that he had thought of nothing else.

He warmly grasped his hand, and the young man drew him into the library, where he gave him an account of what had happened to Isola, her rescue, and subsequent union with himself.

He further informed him that she and Miss Carleton were awaiting an interview. They had come over from the Vale while the trial was going on, and were now in the sitting-room.

"I will go to them," he said; and, followed by George, he hurried to meet his darling.

CHAPTER XLII

Stay! yet a little! It hath taken me
All by surprise—it came too quick upon me.

The Piccolomini.

Thou here? It was not thou whom here I sought.
I trusted never more to have beheld thee.

Wallenstein.

WHILE this exciting scene passed below stairs, one even more painful was going on in Savella's room. Philip's swoon lasted but a few moments, and when he regained control of his faculties, he peremptorily ordered every one to leave the room except his wife. He said:

"Look the door, Savella; I have something terrible to communicate to you."

She obeyed, in a tremor of alarm; and then, throwing herself on a chair beside the bed on which he still lay, passionately said:

"Oh, Philip, what can it be? Nothing that can separate us? everything else I can bear." "Poor girl—poor girl!" he muttered. "She loves me now; but will she still cling to me when she knows all?"

She caught the sense of his words, and eagerly said:

"Do you suppose that I will ever shrink from you, Philip? What is this terrible thing that has stricken you down like a woman? Tell me—I have strength to bear it and to defy the world, if you are by my side."

"Oh, Savella," he replied, with deep emotion, "till this hour I never knew the value of your affection. Through all our future I will prove to you how

highly I estimate your loving trust in this dark and shameful hour of my life. Yet how can I tell you? how can I show you what a villain I have been?"

She gently caressed and soothed him; and when he was calmer, she whispered:

"Tell me now, Philip. I am strong. I can bear—I can forgive all, if you still love me."

Thus encouraged, Philip gained nerve to ask:

"Savella, have you never suspected that you had no right here—that your claims were all a sham?"

Her eyes dilated, and her frame trembled as she indignantly replied:

"Why should you ask me such a question as that, Philip? Do you think I am a robber, who could be capable of carrying out such a deception as that?"

He quivered at the opprobrious word she used.

"Pardou me, Savella. I should not have drawn such an injurious suspicion upon you; but I have a painful task to perform, and I do not know how to begin."

Savella rapidly spoke:

"If there has been any villa'ny, it has been devised and carried out by Mr. Somerton. I have deceived you in but one thing, Philip; and that he compelled me to do. He is the husband of my aunt; though why they concealed their connection I do not understand."

"Your aunt, Savella? May not the relationship be nearer? You are not Mr. Fontaine's niece?"

She became very pale, and a shudder thrilled through her frame. She faltered:

"Is she—can she be my mother? Has she reared me to sustain a false character from my childhood? Oh! Philip, this is too infamous—too dreadful!" And she buried her face in his bosom.

"Savella," he whispered, "hear the worst at once. I have known this since—since I changed in my temper so much. It made me miserable; but I could not escape from the coil they had thrown around me. I have abetted their villainy, though I scorned and detested it. Pity me; forgive me; and I promise to be all to you that the most devoted husband can be."

The form he clasped trembled violently, and Savella burst into a passion of tears. At length, calmed by this outburst of emotion, she slipped from his embrace, and bowing her face upon his hands, sobbed:

"Oh, Philip, what cannot love like mine forgive? Be to me what you were in the first days of our union, and I can still be happy. Take me far from this woman, who has been a mother in name, but from whom I have never received one token of maternal affection. This money, which has caused such sin and degradation, is little to what I can win by my own efforts. We will go where my voice will be fully appreciated, and I will give you wealth in return for your protecting love. Only give me that, and I shall be happy."

Touched, overwhelmed by such generosity, Philip lifted her to his heart, and mingled his tears with hers.

For the first time, he felt that he could truly and tenderly love her.

When their emotion subsided, he gradually unfolded to her the story of Isola; and after a long and confidential conversation, their future plans were arranged.

Savella then packed up her clothing without assistance, and prepared to depart. She had an affecting interview with Fontaine, in which she assured him of her own innocence, and entreated his forbearance toward her husband.

He kindly re-assured her, and pledged himself that Philip's name should not be stained by permitting his acquiescence in the fraud of her stepfather to become publicly known.

Savella then entered the apartment of the signora, to bid a final adieu.

She was hard and cold as ever, and manifested no emotion when her daughter informed her that they must meet no more.

She assured her that so long as she possessed any means of her own, she would share them with her; but future companionship was impossible.

The signora only said:

"When you go on the stage, as you will, and make a fortune, pay my husband what he has spent on you. I ask no more."

"I pledge myself to do that," replied Savella; and thus they parted.

Philip Vane and his wife returned to Dunlora, there to inform his mercenary parents of the signal downfall of his brilliant prospects.

Their bitter disappointment was softened by the assurance of Savella that, by the exercise of her musical abilities, she could yet give Philip a larger fortune than the one they had lost.

This promise was in time realized; Philip could not live in the Vale with such a cloud hanging over him; he induced his parents to offer Dunlora for sale,

and go with him to Paris, where Savella made a successful *début* as a cantatrice. Philip gracefully spent the money she lavished on him without stint; but he was not unmanly enough to recede from the promise pledged in that hour of forgiveness; he treated her kindly, and put a curb on his impatient temper where she was concerned.

Dunlora was purchased by Henry Fontaine for his son-in-law, and Isola was installed there as mistress. Her father remained in England till late in the summer, and then returned to Russia, for he could not be prevailed upon to relinquish his ambitious aspirations for the quiet enjoyment of domestic life.

Before he left, the two brothers read together the letter of their father, which had so deeply moved the elder one when he returned to his home so many years before.

It ran thus:

"MY BELOVED CLAUDE.—A dreary fear is pressing on my heart, for the fearful tidings that have come to me have given me even a deeper stab than my poor Henry's death has inflicted.

"My son, every line in your letter breathes a depth of remorse which can only be the offspring of guilt. Yes—guilt! though my heart exonerates you from intentional evil. If Henry died through any fault of yours, I know it was an involuntary one; and in the sight of heaven you are free from the crime of fratricide.

"I am about to join him who has gone from earth: but my heart yearns with inexpressible tenderness toward you, my noble and true boy. Do not think that this blow has destroyed me, Claude. My doom was written before it fell, and I am sure it has not hastened it.

"Take comfort, take peace to your heart, and become all that I hoped you would be in the future—a noble, true, and courageous man, tearing the heavy cross that has been laid upon you in Christian humility. May God speedily send comfort to you, is the prayer of your loving father,

"CLAUDE FONTAINE."

Henry Fontaine wrung the hand of his brother, and said, with emotion:

"Ah, if I had been more like him, I should have spared you years of suffering. Forgive me, Claude, as I trust God will pardon me for my hardness of heart."

"I trust He has pardoned us both for our wrongdoing," replied Fontaine, devoutly. "I can never be grateful enough for the mercy He has shown to me."

Before Baron Fontaine left his native land he had the satisfaction of seeing his brother restored to health and happiness; and the same morning that gave Fanny's hand to her lover, also bestowed a new mistress on Fontaine, in the person of Carrie Carleton—that faithful one who would have sacrificed her own fortune to keep Claude Fontaine's roof over his head during those dreary days of darkness from which a merciful Providence had delivered him.

THE END.

A LETTER from Bonn states that Prince Alfred of England will arrive there in the autumn, and will study for a year at the university, where, as will be well remembered, the late Prince Consort passed a portion of his youth.

SHOULD BITTER BEER BE TAKEN BEFORE OR DURING MEALS?—For some time past I have been of opinion that bitter beer, which is now in very general use, possesses the property of suspending or retarding the process of digestion if taken during a full meal, more particularly with meat diet. If it be true that the process of digestion is allied to that of fermentation, may we not infer that whatever possesses the property of arresting fermentation may also arrest or retard digestion? We know that hops, when added to beer, especially in excess, prevents the liquor from passing so readily into acetous fermentation; and I believe Liebig informs us that bitters, opium, tobacco, essential oils, &c., also possess the same property. It therefore becomes a dietetical question whether doctors should recommend patients to take bitter beer (the bitter principle may not always be hops, but something more objectionable) during a full meal on meat diet, or whether such beer should be taken before dinner as an ordinary tonic.

A PARROT TELLING HIS MISTRESS WHO HAD ROBBERED HER.—Henry Hill, gunmaker, Smith-street, and Henry Brockington, brush-maker, Hospital-street, were charged at the Police-office, Birmingham, with breaking into the house of William Freeman, coal-dealer, Summer-lane, and stealing 10s. and a silver watch. Mrs. Freeman went out to get some meat for dinner, and locked the door behind her. On her way down the passage leading from the court in which the house is situated, to the street, she saw the two prisoners. On her return she again saw the prisoners, who ran away. She found the door all right; but on

going inside, she discovered that the money drawer of her cabinet had been broken open, and that 10s. and a silver watch had been taken away. The prosecutrix had a parrot in the same room, and she stated, in answer to Mr. Powell, who appeared for Brockington, that when she went in, the parrot said to her, "O, missus, you shouldn't have left the house. Brock has been, with another rogue, and stolen all the money." On hearing this, she at once suspected Brockington and his companion, and reported the robbery to the police, who went immediately in search of the prisoners. They found them in the White Lion, Ludgate-hill, and on searching them, found on Hill's person the watch and 10s. in money, less 1d. The prosecutrix identified a half-crown among the money, by the worn state of the milling. It appears that the same house was broken into by Brockington about four years ago. The case was remanded.

CAPTAIN SPEKE.

THIS Indian soldier and African traveller was born at Jordans, in Somersetshire, in 1827; and to the last nourished that pride in his home and his country which distinguishes all wandering tribes and individuals, from the Arab to the Swiss. "You may depend upon it, gentlemen," such were the words he uttered last year at Taunton, when his fellow-countrymen honoured themselves by having him for a guest, "it was the pride both of my county and my country that carried me through my undertaking." Wherever he happened to be, he "thought of home," he said, "and worked accordingly." In 1844 he entered the army, and soon became remarkable as a sportsman and naturalist. His early exploits were confined to India; a great field, in which he worked most heartily. India led him into Africa; but years elapsed before the crowning glory of his life arrived. Whether he has actually discovered the source of the Nile, is still an open question. His own declaration that, in 1858, he "hit the Nile upon its head," and that, in 1863, he "drove it into the Mediterranean Sea," is perhaps no more than a boast. He had, at all events, more nearly accomplished those ends than any other man, living or dead, in theory or in more important practice. He had come upon the great water which poured over Ripon Falls, and he traced this outpouring stream for 100 of the 800 miles which intervene between the outlet and the known channel of the river at Miani's Tree.

Had Capt. Speke survived, some controversy would have been held between him and his former companion, Capt. Burton, at Bath, on the very day of the traveller's sudden death. There is some idea abroad that Speke had not, on all occasions, rendered full justice to other explorers, in idea or in fact, about the same waters of which he had been in search, and which he discovered. Omitting all reference to what Speke is said not to have done, let us remind our readers of what he said and did. At the Taunton dinner, to which we have already referred, Capt. Speke noticed Dr. Beke's claim to be the theoretical discoverer of the head-waters. Speke acknowledged that the doctor had doubtless imagined the existence of such waters near the locality in which they were found; but the assertion of their existence had been made by native Africans long before. The missionaries, Rebmann and Edhardt, had been told of such a collection of water by the natives. This communication was made about ten years ago; and one of the missionaries sent notice of that fact to the Royal Geographical Society in England. By that society, Capt. Speke, who knew the use of surveying instruments, was commissioned to accompany Burton, with whom he had formerly served in Africa, in search of the waters of the lake and their outlet. At Kingam, they were told of three lakes, the Nyanza, the Tanganyika, and the Nyassa. Burton elected to go to the Tanganyika, and Speke accompanied him.

There Burton fell ill; the supplies were exhausted, and he resolved to return; but Speke had then discovered the southern end of Nyanza; and next year, in company with Grant—Burton being then unable to accompany them, as he otherwise would have done—made that discovery of the outlet of the head-waters of the Nile which rewarded all he had undergone in accomplishing it.

The first honours, according to his own account, fell fairly to the man who can now no longer enjoy them; but Grant and Burton, as members of the general expedition, are entitled, in separate ways and degrees, to ample honours, too.

Figuratively, England crowns each explorer with laurel, nor thinks the loss of Burton merely because the accident of illness prevented him from reaching the long-sought goal at which his more fortunate comrades ultimately arrived.

AN ENGLISH DESERTER.—A non-commissioned officer in the garrison of Kingston, Canada West, re-

ceived last month a letter dated from the camp before Petersburg, written by a deserter who, signing himself anonymously "A Gunner of the Royal Artillery," is well known. The writer says:—"I am sorry that I was such a fool as to be persuaded to come over here, where you are driven about worse than niggers. Please to tell my comrades not to be guided by them crimps, for they tell you that you'll get 800 dollars, but it is no such thing. All you get is 100 dollars; and that they will rob you of if you don't look out. I will tell you who brought me over.

If you go and search their house, you will find some of my clothes there. Them men ought to be severely punished, for I tell you it is no better than trading with a lot of cattle. There are some more that are trying to get away, and they say they will get them away in spite of you. Please tell them if they know when they are well off they will stop where they are, unless they want to be treated worse than slaves. Please to put this in the papers, so as no other soldier shall be duped. Please tell them, not to believe their lies, for it is all false; what they want is to sell them as slaves. They ought to be found out and punished. I would freely do four years to be back again. Please let my comrades see this."

LOVER AND HUSBAND.

ZERLINA, the young Countess of Salviati, sat in her handsome boudoir surrounded with every luxury—the music of song birds in her ears, and the balmy air, laden with perfume from the valley of the Arno, upon her cheek—yet she was not happy. Young, handsome, and titled, united to one of the best descended and wealthiest nobles in Florence, what more did she wish?

Gossip accounted for the shade upon her fair cheek, and the sad smile that froze upon her ruby lips. It was said the Count of Salviati possessed her hand, but her heart had long before been given to another.

Five years before, a Spanish cavalier, Don Ferdinand de Merida, nephew to the Marquis de Castello, Governor of Florence, had flashed like a meteor upon the Florentines.

Young, of good figure, pleasant features, and hair of deepest jet, and a soldier—a modern Roland, as it were—no wonder he caused many a flutter among the hearts of the fair damsels of Florence.

Zerlina's heart was soon ensnared by this gay butterfly. Equally enamoured, he resolved to lay his freedom at her feet. They were engaged, when duty called him to the war in Hungary. They parted with mutual protestations of eternal fidelity.

Alas! for the mutability of all human affairs. Tidings of the most fearful import were soon brought to Florence. Ferdinand had basely deserted his colours and gone over to the enemy. He was outlawed by the senate, and a sentence of death passed upon his head.

Next came the report that he was married to a Polish princess—her hand being the reward of his treachery. This last blow was too much for the pride of Zerlina. His treachery against the state under which he had taken service she could have forgiven; but she could never forgive his treachery against her. In her despair and pique, she had married Count Salviati, who had long sighed hopelessly at her feet.

Thus it is that we find her, on this beautiful afternoon of summer sitting by the open window of her boudoir with her thoughts bent upon the absent and false Ferdinand. Deeply as her husband loved her, he could not awake an answering thrill in her heart; he could not unveil the tomb consecrated to the absent and the lost. He had perceived this, and that or some other cause had aroused his jealousy, and converted him from a light, mercurial nobleman into a morose and sullen domestic tyrant.

He watched the actions of the countess with the hundred eyes of Argus. The countess was ignorant of two-thirds of the espionage practised upon her. What she did perceive caused her remorse, and she accused herself of the crime of not loving her husband. But the heart cannot be tutored. She performed her duty as a wife conscientiously; but love is not duty, and will not be fettered. With all his jealous vigilance, Salviati could find no cause of reproach against Zerlina, except the absence of her love. But there was where the shoe pinched. What did he expect? He knew her heart was Ferdinand's when he married her; and the man who marries a woman who loves another curses his own life.

He could not place a sentinel on her thoughts, and, therefore, could only guess how often they were bent upon the absent Ferdinand.

She was thinking more deeply of him than ever this afternoon. For three years he had not been heard from.

She wondered if he was dead!

A servant entered the apartment, and disturbed her reverie.

He came to announce the Marquis de Castello, Governor of Florence. She was thinking of the nephew; and, lo! the uncle comes. What should it bode?

The marquis entered, and she greeted him warmly. He was a portly, jovial-looking man, in the prime of life.

"To what am I indebted for this visit?" she asked, when the marquis had availed himself of her invitation, and seated himself in a comfortable chair by the window.

"First, to the honour of offering my compliments of the day; and, next, to converse with you on an important affair," he replied. "After three years' silence, who do you think has thought fit to write to me?"

"Who?" asked the countess, absently.

"Who but my nephew, the Chevalier Ferdinand!" The countess started, and became at once eagerly attentive.

The marquis proceeded:

"He is confident of being able to vindicate his conduct, and will shortly be again in Florence."

"In Florence? Gracious heaven! and the warrant which condemns him—"

"I have lost no time. Well knowing that without a free passport, he dare not appear in Florence, I have demanded one of the council, and I will have it. As I told them, I am no governor, if I do not govern in this instance; and I would lay down half the remainder of my life, and the whole of my fortune, to vindicate my poor boy's character."

"What motive does he allege for his long silence?" asked the countess, breathlessly.

"What? why he disavows his pretended marriage with the daughter of the Polish minister." A cold perspiration stood on the forehead of the countess, and a faintness seized her, but she controlled herself by a mighty effort. "And yet such authentic proofs were produced to confirm it that I punished him myself, seconding the count's addresses to you. He gives me his honour that, at that very time, he was a prisoner of war in Hungary, without any means whatever of making his situation known to us. Nay, more—he states, that so far from having abandoned the cause of Florence, he has been exposed to the most cruel treatment for having refused to enter into the service of the emperor. And yet, on this charge, also, we had authentic proof. Somebody has been telling monstrous falsehoods, countess, and if it prove that my nephew has thus aggravated his crimes—"

"He has not!" interrupted the countess, fervently. "He is innocent! Thank heaven for it!"

"Why, so I think—at least, so I will think; for it is so long since I have had a bit of bright sunshine, I am resolved to make the most of it. But where is the count, your husband?—his interest with the senate may be most servicable."

"My lord, I—I—pray speak to him yourself, governor," answered the countess, in much embarrassment. "You are aware of the restraint that is on me. His violent and suspicious disposition."

"I understand," laughed the marquis. "What! still jealous? Even though married these four years! Excuse me then—he is in the palace, and I must see him at once."

The marquis withdrew, and Zerlina was left alone with her own thoughts. And bitter company they were. The only man she ever loved was true; she felt the conviction in her inmost soul; and he had returned to find her false—the wife of another, and mother of a boy.

Well might she wring her hands in agony, and gaze into the garden, over which the shades of evening were stealing in blank despair.

Through the gathering gloom of twilight, cautiously making his way amid the shrubbery, came the figure of a man.

He paused before the open window, and softly whispered:

"Zerlina!"

"Gracious heavens!" exclaimed the countess, rising in the utmost alarm. "Ferdinand, fly! should the count—"

"Fear nothing; your faithful maid, Paulina, who gave me entrance to the garden, is on the watch, and will apprise me of any interruption; besides, the count has left the palace."

He was there, standing before her, the pearl of her heart!

Though he was closely muffled in a cloak, he had pushed his broad-leaved hat from off his brow, so that she could see his face clearly.

It was pale and careworn, and bore the marks of long suffering. Yea, he had suffered, and for her. Her heart bled for him.

"Why are you here?" she faltered.

"Zerlina, I come to justify myself, and it is before you—"

"Ferdinand!" she interrupted. "I am the wife of Salviati."

"It is my respect for that tie, madam," he answered, sadly, "my tenderness for your happiness, however you have ruined mine, that brings me before you."

"What can you mean?"

"Yes, madam, the brand of infamy is on my name! the wound of stabbed affection festers at my heart. Yet, for you, vengeance pauses with uplifted arm and lays its thunder-bolt in mercy at your feet. A man who called himself my friend has profited by my absence, spread the false tale of a marriage which was never contemplated; and in order to prevent me from ever undeceiving you, has had the base villainy to accuse me as a traitor, and succeeded in obtaining the warrant for my death. And this man, whose guilt I have written proofs of, and whom I ought to offer up for punishment!—what think you, Zerlina?—this villain I must screen from justice."

"Screen him? Why, Ferdinand?"

"Because he is your husband, Zerlina," was the fearful answer.

Oh! what a pang shot through the heart of the unhappy wife. She understood at once the base deceit by which she had been won. She had never loved her husband—henceforth she could look upon him only with loathing.

"He is your husband," continued Ferdinand, "and whatever his crimes, that title makes him sacred in my eyes. You shall possess the proofs, madam, written in a hand which would to heaven you did not recognize. No name shall be compromised—I only seek to clear mine from dishonour—the proofs shall be placed in your hands for the senate only to see, and I will leave this land for ever. I now return to Ranzi."

"To Ranzi?" echoed the countess.

"It is there I have taken refuge. It is there, too, I have concealed the fatal papers. I go; but, Zerlina, before leaving you, promise that we shall meet again. Will you not come this evening—two hours hence—to Ranzi? Remember, it is absolutely necessary that I should unfold to you the details of this villainy."

"Meet you at Ranzi?" cried the countess, aghast, "I dare not. My duty—the count's jealousy."

"Remember that you alone can rescue him from certain destruction. I will deliver the papers to no one but yourself."

"Fly, for heaven's sake!" exclaimed Zerlina, hurriedly, thinking she heard footsteps in the corridor. "Pledge me your word," he insisted.

"Impossible! No, no; I must not."

"Should you hesitate, your husband will be for ever dishonoured, and your son, also."

"Ah! my child! I will be there, Ferdinand. I will be there. I swear it!"

The mother granted what the wife denied.

He was gone, and now Zerlina had time for reflection. It was imprudent to have promised to meet Ferdinand at the old, deserted chateau of Ranzi; but when she considered how much was at stake, she did not regret her promise. She began making preparations to keep that promise. Her faithful maid, Paulina, was summoned, and her assistance availed of.

Ranzi was but two miles distant. The countess knew every step of the road, for the old chateau formed part of her dowry, and she had resided there when a child. She resolved to go there alone, and on foot. Paulina was to remain in her chamber, and exclude all visitors on the plea of sickness.

While the countess was arranging her expedition, the count, in his private study, strangely enough, was preparing one of the same nature.

The Marquis de Castello had left him about sundown (after conveying to him the startling intelligence of Ferdinand's speedy arrival in Florence); and scarcely had he departed when a sinister, dark-browed man was ushered into his presence.

This was a ruined, spendthrift nobleman, Callari by name. A strange associate for the high-born Salvati; but guilt makes strange fellowship.

"Callari," exclaimed Salvati; "you see me in fear and horror."

"What! are you already informed?"

"Ferdinand!"

"I know—he is returned; already not more than two miles off, at Ranzi."

"At Ranzi?"

"Imagining, doubtless, that the old chateau still belonged to the countess's family, he has concealed himself there since yesterday."

"Merciful powers!" cried the count, pacing the floor with agitated steps. "Should he reappear? Should he appeal to the senate?"

"Why, if he should," answered Callari, bluntly, "we, who are the authors of his exile, and obtained his death-warrant that you might obtain the countess's hand, are in such peril that there is nothing left for it but to be prompt."

"It was she!" cried the count, not heeding his companion, and unconsciously uttering his thoughts aloud. "It was my ungovernable love for Zerlina

that imperceptibly, step by step, plunged me into the dark abyss of guilt. Oh! Callari, could I retrace my steps."

"In vain," answered the other, impatiently; "you must proceed, and instantly."

"What proofs can he have against me?"

"Both our letters—those we wrote to his valet for the false correspondence we required, and which he has to supply us with. The rogue repented of having assisted us, and in the moment of his death delivered the fatal papers to his master."

"Callari," exclaimed the count, fearfully agitated, "you may be deceived; you are not certain he is at Ranzi?"

"Two of my trusty emissaries have watched him—from them I learn that he often pronounces your name in a tone of vengeance. As for me, I am honoured with my titles—wretch, outcast, desperado, and the like."

"I once regarded Ferdinand."

"So you did me," said Callari, insiduously—determined to apply the spark which he knew would fire the count to madness; "and, at any rate might still regard yourself—ay, and your wife. Might it not be dangerous for the countess to behold him once more?"

"Confusion!" cried the count, wildly, and stung to the quick by the allusion; "if I thought that—yes, yes, she who once loved him so tenderly, and still in bold defiance of my power, oft dwells upon his name. She in his sight! Callari, never, never, shall he cross my path again!"

"No!" echoed Callari, with exultation, "never shall he re-enter Florence!"

It is not difficult to persuade a man who has taken one step in crime to take the second. The murder of Ferdinand was resolved upon. Muffled in cloaks, their hats drawn low upon their foreheads, and armed with daggers, the assassins stole forth upon their guilty errand. The night was dark and the old chateau was shrouded in gloom as they approached it, after a brisk walk. Not a light was to be seen. They tried the door—it was fastened. At the suggestion of Callari they sought to force an entrance by the window. Proceeding with as little noise as possible, so as not to disturb their victim, they were interrupted by the sound of footsteps hastily approaching up the avenue. Ferdinand was not in the house—he was coming. They concealed themselves. A figure, muffled in a cloak and wearing a hat that totally concealed the features, hastily mounted the steps and knocked at the chateau door. At that moment the assassins sprang forward, and both struck at once.

A scream rent the air—a woman's scream; the door suddenly opened, and Ferdinand appeared upon the threshold, a lighted taper in his hand. Salvati beheld a white dress dabbled with blood, and saw the face of Zerlina, and then turned and fled, pursued by avenging furies. And as he fled, he heard a pistol shot break sharply upon the night air, and a mingled curse and groan issue from the lips of Callari.

With the speed of madness—for the unhappy man was in a delirium—he hastened to his home, ordered his swiftest steed to be saddled, awoke his infant son from his slumber and bore him from the palace in his arms, mounted the steed, and plunging his spurs deep in the horse's flanks, dashed like an arrow away, leaving the palace in a state of consternation and affright, which was not allayed by the appearance, an hour after, of the inanimate form of the countess on a litter, borne by some peasants, whom Ferdinand had summoned to his aid.

Though desperately wounded, life still lingered in the frame of the hapless countess. Ferdinand sent for surgeons; and though he knew the risk he ran, would not quit her side until he received assurance that her life might be preserved. In adopting the disguise of a man, by wearing an old cloak and hat belonging to her husband, Zerlina had unconsciously preserved Ferdinand's life, although her own had nearly been the sacrifice.

Count Salvati never returned alive. The day following his sudden departure, a mangled heap, consisting of a horse, a man, and a child, were found at the bottom of a ravine near the roadside, ten miles from Florence. The man and child were identified as Count Salvati and his son. Callari expiated his crimes upon that fearful night. A bullet from the pistol which Ferdinand had discharged in the first moment of his surprise, ended his career.

The sentence against Ferdinand was revoked, as the death of Salvati left him free to produce the proofs of his innocence. Zerlina survived her wounds to bestow her hand upon her first love, the restored Ferdinand; and many were their days of happiness—a happiness rendered more sweet by the memory of the bitter past.

G. L. A.

DO THE BEES GATHER HONEY FROM FLOWERS?
—We doubt it—we have always doubted it. We are sitting now, as we write, under the branches of a chest-

nut-tree, among the leaves of which the bees are buzzing merrily. They are not after the flowers, for the flowering season has long since passed. It is mid-August; the burrs are an inch and a half in diameter. What are the bees after? Not the chestnut burrs, surely. We have just examined and solved the question. The leaves are covered with "honey-dew," and we have observed in every good season for honey, that this substance was abundant. And so we have observed, in seasons when there was no "honey-dew," that everybody said, "what a poor season for honey!" Now we close with a repetition of the question, "Do the bees gather their great store of honey from flowers?"

PRISON DIET.

MR. C. H. BRACEBRIDGE said that, in the military prison in Dublin, it was the practice to test the weight and muscles of every man on entering the prison, and to make a similar examination upon his discharge; and if any deterioration in either respect was found, a long correspondence ensued, and blame was visited where it was merited. He had been shown the dietaries, and to his surprise, they included no meat at all, except a little on Sundays, and that on other days the diet consisted of a large quantity of milk, a large quantity of oatmeal made into porridge, and a large quantity of Indian corn meal. The men were returned in a most satisfactory manner; they had to work exceedingly hard, but their labour was not of an exhausting nature: and out of the number about 90 per cent. came up to the same weight and muscle as when they entered, only 10 per cent. showing a small defalcation.

The president said that vegetarians, so far as he understood, indulged in milk and fats—important elements of food, and only excluded that kind of animal food which required the life of the animal to be taken. The custom in Ireland was for labourers to take with them 3½ lb. of potatoes for dinner, a pint and a half of skim milk, and they took three pints of skim milk in the course of the day. In Scotland there was the same large quantity of milk taken, and in that way the so-called vegetable diet became a highly animal diet. One or two cases amongst the Lancashire operatives which had come under his notice deserved attention. In one case a woman lived on 1s. 9d. a week. She had an allowance of 2s.; but of that she applied 8d. a week to redeeming her clothes from pawn. This woman bought 12 lb. of bread, and half a pound of treacle, a quarter of a pound of bacon, three herrings, and one ounce of coffee; so that she was able to get bacon or herrings five days in the week. In another case a woman lived upon 2s. 0½d. a week, upon a dietary made up of 8 lb. of bread, 1½ lb. of oatmeal, 1 lb. of treacle, 1½ lb. of bacon, half a pound of sugar, two pints of skim milk, and one ounce of coffee.—*The British Association.*

ONE of the great causes of delay in the settlement of peace is said to have arisen from the fears of the people of Holstein, who fancy that a heavier proportion of the burden of taxation is about to be imposed upon them than upon the Danes. They allege that the liabilities of the new State of Schleswig-Holstein, according to the proposed financial division, will be £9,500,000 sterling, or about £9 10s. for each individual, whilst those of Denmark will not exceed £7,000,000.

A RETURN is published in New Zealand of the names of all rebel natives who have subscribed to the Declaration of Allegiance, and delivered up their arms, from the 5th February to the 31st May of this year. The numbers who have complied with these conditions are—42 in the Thames district, 7 in the Waikato district, 88 in the Lower Waikato, 11 in the Upper Waikato, 33 in the Raglan district, 1 in Central Wanganui, 22 in the Manawhatu district; making a total of 154. The number of guns that these rebels have brought in is 64, together with 1 pistol; and tomahawks, spears, and clubs are the arms given up by such of the rest as possessed them. 65 of them, however, had no arms of any kind.

SIBYL LEE.

CHAPTER X.

Octavia.	Spare thyself
The pang of needless separation!	
Come with me, my son.	
Max.	The unalterable
Shall I perform ignobly? No!	The human race
Have steely souls,—but she is as an angel.	German Play.

LEAVING Beatrice, the flower-girl, and her griefs, we will return to Alice Hunt.

The winter, to which Margaret Harding had looked forward with such dismal apprehensions when Mrs.

Stanley withdrew her patronage, was passing far more pleasantly and prosperously than her hopeful young charge had anticipated.

Thanks to the scheme suggested by Edward Stanley, there had been comfort in their quiet home, and to the two lovers those had been halcyon days.

They sat reading in the sitting-room one cold, clear night, when a carriage drove to the door, a quick, sharp ring was heard, and Margaret Harding admitted Mr. and Mrs. Stanley.

Both Alice and her lover started to their feet in dismay, and it was with difficulty that Edward could articulate:

"Father! Mother!"

The unexpected guests extended their hands, and Mr. Stanley exclaimed:

"We cannot do without you, my boy, and we have come to seek a reconciliation."

The young man was too much overpowered to speak; but his cheek burned, and his eyes kindled with sudden joy.

"Reflection has shown us our error," continued Mr. Stanley. "We were wrong for wishing to curse you with an unloved wife—for disinheriting you when you refused to accede to our demands. As for you, Miss Hunt, we hear much of your sweetness of temper, your industry, and your true refinement, and believe we have cherished an absurd prejudice against you; can you, will you forgive us?"

Alice's tears fell fast, as she murmured

"Oh! yes, yes—can you doubt it?"

"A thousand thanks," rejoined Mr. Stanley. "Since you have forgiven us—you who are the most injured—my son cannot refuse his pardon."

"My dear, dear father, this is the happiest hour of my life; it is what I dared not hope. Sit down, sit down, and let us have a pleasant evening together."

The visitors removed their wrappings; and no one who witnessed the scene which ensued, would have scarcely credited the fact that they had ever been estranged.

When they rose to go, Mrs. Stanley declared Grace and Dora would call in the morning, and Edward and Alice must come and dine quite *en famille* at three. Alice retired to rest, grateful at the change which had taken place, and her lover could scarcely recognize that a reconciliation had been effected.

Hitherto his parents had not bowed when they met him in the streets, and Grace had imitated their example; but Dora was as frank and affectionate as when the same roof sheltered them, and only her mother's strict prohibition had kept her from visiting Alice.

Margaret Harding was still somewhat doubtful, which combined to render her suspicious, but she did not breathe her fears to Edward or her young charge.

The day subsequent to the reconciliation, Grace and Dora came to the house in which their brother had lodgings, and inquired for Miss Hunt.

The visitors were shown into the room in which Mrs. and Mr. Stanley had been ushered the night before; and Grace, aristocratic as she was, mentally confessed she could not wonder at Ned's penchant for Alice Hunt. The bright, bewildering face, with that pair of eloquent eyes, the shower of glossy curls sweeping about her, the blushes and smiles, which came and went, the lithe figure in its merino morning dress, the frill of lace at the white throat, the rosebuds and geranium leaves twisted amid her tresses, and rising and falling with every emotion above her young heart, formed no ordinary picture.

"Good morning, Miss Hunt," said Grace Stanley, as she held out her daintily gloved hand, "we have come to renew our acquaintance with you, and beg pardon for past neglect."

The words were gracefully spoken, but the little seamstress felt far more moved when Dora flung her arms around her neck and cried:

"Oh! Alice, Alice! isn't it delightful to be on such terms with you and Edward? I tell you I'm the happiest girl in existence," and she went spinning across the floor in her exuberant joy.

"Dora," exclaimed Miss Stanley, "you are not very dignified in your behaviour."

"I never was. I leave that to you and mamma. Ned and I were born under a different planet."

Alice broke into a laugh as musical as her voice, and as contagious as her smile; Dora joined in it with a good will; and as Grace could not resist the effect of such merriest, the room rang.

This glee dispelled the awkwardness they had all felt on meeting, and the hour spent was a pleasant one.

When Ned came in, after the departure of his sisters, he was not a little gratified to hear that the interview had been thus agreeable to Alice, and declared that he could not think of declining the kind invitation to dine with his family.

Mrs. Stanley sent the carriage for them, and she was astonished beyond measure when Alice entered the room, leaning on her son's arm.

Alice wore a blue and brown changeable silk,

which had been her mother's, and she had remodelled with her own skilful fingers; the hue enhanced the fairness of her complexion, and the flowers that fastened her corsage and drooped low over her crimsoned cheek were the sole ornaments she needed.

There was also about her an air of ladyhood, and if the party who gathered round Mrs. Stanley's table expected any unlucky *contretemps* from her presence, they were disappointed.

When the ladies had left the dining-room, the proud father held a long conference with his son.

"My boy," he said, "our separation has proved how dear you are to me. I am growing old; I cannot live without you. What folly it was to send you off because you had fallen in love with this little Alice, who has already bewitched me. Why, Ned, I watched her earnestly, and no truer lady ever sat down to my table."

"Thank you, sir; Alice's praise is far sweeter than my own."

"Ay, ay, I don't doubt it; but I must proceed to business. Will you come back and live with me, my boy, and study law after the old plan?"

"Yes, if my present employers will release me."

"They must give you up; you were not cut out for a merchant, but a lawyer, Ned."

"So I believe, my dear father; and yet I have gained the esteem of Wilde and Co. for my course since I have been with them."

"What you do must be done well, my boy. I know that; and look forward to the day when I shall be proud of your rising reputation."

"And of my wife, too," observed the young man.

"Yes, yes. While you are pursuing your studies, she must have advantages; and I think she had better go with Dora to Madame Berniere's boarding-school, some ten miles distant. I am willing to defray her expenses for two years, when you will be ready to claim your bride."

"You are most generous, my father, but I need not avail myself of it; my college chum left me a legacy, which I have been saying to form the basis of my future business, but it shall be appropriated to Alice's education."

"Well, be it as you please; but I cannot rest till you are again installed in your home." And he talked on in an animated strain for some time, as kind and tender as if his son had never been banished from his roof.

A week later Edward Stanley was an inmate of his father's establishment, and had resumed the study of his profession, while his evenings were spent with Alice, who was fast making preparations to enter Madame Berniere's boarding-school. Nothing could be more pleasant than her intercourse with the Stanleys, nor more bright than her hopes of the bliss in store for her.

One morning, as the young man walked into the office, he saw a tall, regal figure standing by his father's chair, with a roll of papers in her hand. She was speaking in a low, soft, silvery tone, and at length Mr. Stanley said:

"Pray be seated, madam, and I will examine the papers."

The lady sank into an office chair, and remained silent, while the lawyer read and re-read the document with legal precision.

"I understood you to say," he resumed, after the perusal, "that your claim to these warehouses had been disputed."

"Yes, sir; and I feel as if I could trust no common attorney where so much is at stake, and have therefore come to you."

"You are complimentary, madam," rejoined Mr. Stanley. "I hope I can show you that your confidence is not misplaced, and establish your title beyond the shadow of a doubt. I must look into the case, however; and as soon as I have done so, I will let you know my opinion."

There was a brief conversation, inaudible to the young man, and then his father said:

"Edward, this lady believes she recognizes a former acquaintance in you."

Edward Stanley started and advanced to the woman, who suddenly flung back her veil, revealing a fair face lighted up by a pair of lustrous eyes, and framed in by a mass of purple black hair.

"Mrs. Lee," continued Mr. Stanley, by way of introduction.

"Ah!" exclaimed his son, "I never dreamed that Sibyl Talbot was the widow of the late Mr. Lee, or I should have paid my respects before."

"And where, pray, did you meet?" asked Mr. Stanley.

"You recollect, sir, that during my last vacation, two years ago, I went down to the seaside for a short time. Mr. Talbot plunged into the waters and rescued me when my boat capsized, and their cottage was a home for me during the rest of my stay. Mrs. Lee proved an indefatigable nurse, and I shall not soon forget her kindness."

"I thought you must have forgotten it," replied the lady, with a droop of the eye, which rendered her very charming; "but since you apologize for your neglect, I shall overlook it."

"Circumstances have changed since," observed the young man; "and had I known you were the lady to whom such frequent reference has been made among your late husband's friends, I should not have been surprised at his infatuation at leaving you sole heiress of his wealth."

Mrs. Lee smiled and made some graceful reply, and Edward Stanley handed her to her carriage. As she sank back against the rich cushions, a triumphant gleam shot into her eyes, and she murmured:

"My work has begun. Edward Stanley is neither blind nor deaf, and ere three months have gone by I shall see him at my feet."

CHAPTER XL

It is too late!

I suffer not myself to feel compassion. *Anna.*

LILLIAN ETHRIDGE'S mansion was all ablaze with light, fragrant with the breath of hothouse flowers, and gay with the sheen of festal robes; for it was her birthday-night *fête*, and the *élites* of the fashionable world were gathered within her walls.

Never before had Lillian appeared so peerless and like a queen; she moved from room to room, dispensing the hospitality of her house. Her evening dress was a plum-coloured velvet, just the hue you find on the outer coating of a ripe damson; and strings of large pearls were woven around her neck and arms, and through the mass of her hair.

Supper was over, and she was ascending to her room to re-arrange her toilet, when she heard a gentleman ask:

"Where is Ashburton? I thought he used to admire Miss Etheridge exceedingly, and cannot divine what keeps him from her ball."

"Why, he is half-wild about Agnes Edgecombe, the great actress. He's terribly in love with her; and she is ill—dying, they say. He looks like a madman."

Lillian waited to hear no more. Her brain whirled, her breath came in sudden gasps, and it was with difficulty she could drag herself to her dressing chamber.

"Catherine dying!" she moaned; "and I shut my door against her. Oh! I must go to her. In an hour more the company will disperse, and then I will fly to her side. How shall I play my rôle till they are gone? How can I smile, and talk civilly, when my heart is full of her?"

She bathed her brow, and drenched her handkerchief with perfume, and went down to her dreary task below. The last set was danced, the last guest had driven away, when she hurried into her room, and flung a cloak over her ball-dress, flew to her sister's residence. Of a drowsy servant, who opened the door, she inquired for Miss Edgecombe, and was conducted by a waiting-maid into the chamber where her sister lay. Everything was so solemn and still that her own brilliantly lighted mansion rose before her in painful contrast. Her halls had echoed with laughter, and song, and dance-music, while Catherine's were pervaded by the quiet which death, or great peril, inevitably bring. She had been resplendent in velvet and jewels, while the invalid's wasted form was shrouded in a white wrapper, and her face took a more delicate aspect from the lace frill of her night toilette. With these thoughts lying heavy at her heart, her keen eye glanced around the apartment, which was full of evidences of her sister's profession. The dramatic works which covered the table had by her couch; the magnificent stage wardrobe, revealed by the open door of the closet; the plumes, and gloves, and caskets scattered here and there, brought back a tide of bitter memories to Lillian Ethridge. Catherine had fallen asleep, and two little figures knelt beside her, watching every labouring breath, every flush, as it rose and died on the thin cheek, every movement of the white fingers clasped on the counterpane. The first aroused no special interest in Lillian, but at sight of Kate she trembled and grew pale. The child had recovered from her illness, and thanks to Miss Edgecombe's generosity, looked rosy and healthy. Her companion, as our readers may suspect, was the orange girl who had carried Katy's message to the great tragedienne. Lane Mary sat near, gentle and patient as when we first saw her; and the three glanced up in surprise when Miss Etheridge approached.

"How long has Miss Edgecombe been ill?" she asked Mary.

"Two weeks, madam."

"Ah! I never heard of it till to-night. What is her disease, pray?"

"The worst form of typhus fever; it has been prevailing a good deal, and I don't know but she might have taken it from a little girl she took a fancy to. The doctor says, too, she's had some great shock, and over-exerted herself when she'd no heart for the stage."

Once more Lillian shuddered, as she recalled the interview in her own stately home, and the harsh words that must have burned like fire.

"I will share your vigil, she said, and flung back her cloak, disclosing the purple robe and the coils of pearls, which seemed so much out of place in a sick room.

"Perhaps," observed Mary, "you are a lady of her profession."

"No, I detest the theatre; but I used to be her friend, and hearing she was ill, I hastened to her without taking off my party dress. Who is that little girl, with the brown eyes and hair?"

And heaven only knew with what intense anxiety she listened for a reply.

"Kitty Oliver, ma'am: the child Miss Edgewcombe befriended when she needed care and kindness."

"And how did the acquaintance begin?"

"It is a strange story, ma'am; in some way Kitty got a sight of the actress when she went to rehearsal, and crept into the theatre to see the play. She didn't care for anybody but Miss Edgewcombe; and when she left the stage Kitty fell asleep under a seat, where she'd curled herself up. The crowd had gone before she woke, and she began to cry; for she believed she was all alone in that great lonesome building. But Miss Edgewcombe happened to be in the green-room, and found her. Kitty was ragged and barefoot, a pitiable object then; but she has got a mind, ma'am, beyond her years, and the actress was interested in her."

Lillian Ethridge had sunk into a chair, and her jewelled hand shaded her face; but, though Mary did not perceive it, a thousand conflicting emotions were mirrored in her countenance. When the nurse had concluded her recital, she murmured:

"How singular!" and lapsed into silence.

At length the tragedienne awoke, and laid her fingers softly on her protégée's curling hair; then her gaze wandered to Beth, to Mary, and the purple-robed figure by the bedside.

"Lillian!" she gasped; "Lillian! can it be you are with me?"

"Yes, Catherine, I could not stay away; as soon as I learned what had befallen you, I came to you."

"I'm dying, Lillian, and I have yearned for you—to you I can speak what I've dared breathe to no other. I am deeply interested in the child who is kneeling by me—Kitty Oliver. If I had lived, I would have acted most generously by her. If I die, the fortune I have amassed by my profession must be hers. Listen." And drawing her sister's head down to her pillow, she whispered a few broken sentences in her ear—sentences which gave Miss Ethridge a glimpse at the most hidden leaves of her heart.

"I promise," murmured Lillian, "in due time she shall know; and as for him, I will be on the alert. There, there, I hope you can rest now."

"Rest!" reiterated the actress. "I could rest if my mind were at peace. Pray for me, Lillian."

"Alas! I cannot," faltered the lady; but Mary knelt and prayed till the serenity of her own face was reflected in that of the great tragedienne.

Once more she sank into slumber; and when the physician came at day-break, he declared the symptoms much more favourable.

As Lillian moved into an adjoining room to close the door, she saw the haggard countenance of Lawrence Ashburton. He stood leaning against the wall, and looked ten years older than when they last met.

"Miss Ethridge!" he exclaimed. "What has brought you to the sick-room of an actress?"

"Step in a moment, Mr. Ashburton, and I will tell you, for I believe you are a man of honour, and I can rely on you."

"Most assuredly, Miss Ethridge." And the young man followed her into the hushed and silent chamber.

"What will you say, sir," she began in a low tone,

"when you know that Agnes Edgewcombe is merely a stage name, and the great tragedienne is no other than Catherine Ethridge, and my sister?"

"Your sister!" cried Ashburton; "can it be possible?"

"Yes. Circumstances have estranged us and cut her asunder from her family; but I recognized her as soon as I saw her on the stage that memorable evening when I went to the theatre with you."

"And she knew you also. That accounts for the look she gave you when she was called before the curtain."

"Yes, sir; the next day she came to see me, and begged for a reconciliation, but I drove her from my door. I told her she had chosen her path, and she must walk in it."

"How cruel!" And Lawrence Ashburton grew grave and stern.

"I will not deny it; but when, at my party last night, some chance talk apprised me of her illness, my pride, my prejudices melted, and I hurried to her!"

"And does she understand the change in you?"

"Yes—we have had a confidential interview; and since I came she has slept more quietly, and the physician gives us a little hope."

"Thank heaven!" And Mr. Ashburton spoke huskily. "I can never tell what I have suffered for the past fortnight."

"Heigho! I wonder if I shall ever have such love as yours lavished upon me," rejoined Miss Ethridge.

"There is plenty of counterfeit, but little genuine coin. Your devotion to my sister recalls that of the knights of old; but I must not stay. Good morning."

As she spoke, Mr. Ashburton retired, and Lillian returned to her post.

Days dragged by, and the actress still lay dangerously ill; but as time wore on, the papers announced to the throng of her admirers that her recovery was now deemed certain.

Even after she had begun to grow convalescent, Miss Ethridge continued her visits; and rumour declared that, though she disliked the stage, she had been like a sister to the tragedienne, in whom she had recognized a former friend.

When they came back from their first drive—a drive into the pleasant country—little Katy was not to be found. Miss Edgewcombe searched the rooms in vain, and then Lillian begged her to lie down while she should look for the missing child. Meeting her sister's maid, she inquired for Kitty. The girl thought she must have strolled out for a walk; and quitting herself and the actress with this assurance, Lillian bent her steps homeward. She had scarcely reached her residence, however, when she learned that during her (Miss Edgewcombe's) absence a stranger had come for Katy; and though she begged to be allowed to stay till the invalid should return, he rudely forced her from the house.

The tragedienne started up in dismay, and exclaiming, "I will go for her!"—hastily prepared for a drive.

In an hour more her carriage stood before the dingy old building, tenanted by Jim Watt's family, and scores of men, women, and children, as poor and squalid as they.

"Ah, ma'am," said Mrs. Watt, dropping a stiff curtsy, "it's some time since you've been here."

"Yes, and 'tis by no means a pleasant task; but I am in search of Katy. While I was out driving, she disappeared, and one of the servants asserted that a stranger had forced her away. As you were her former guardian, I thought you must have sent for her, thus breaking your promise and obliging me to come for her."

"La!" cried the woman, holding up her hands, "you are desperately mistaken. I don't want the child; she was always a plague to me, and I should have put her in the workhouse if you hadn't took her in. But a father's right to his own, and Mr. Oliver has come back from Australia, and he's going to take Katy to live with him."

At this sudden and startling revelation the tragedienne staggered to a seat, and mechanically drew forth her vinaigrette.

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Mrs. Watt, "why, you are as white as a sheet!"

"I have been ill, and am weak and faint; throw open a window—I cannot breathe in your stifling atmosphere!"

The woman obeyed, and in a few moments Miss Edgewcombe asked hoarsely:

"Where shall I find this Mr. Oliver?"

Mrs. Watt accompanied her to the rickety door, and bade her boy Andrew guide the actress to Mr. Oliver's lodgings. Wearily Miss Edgewcombe threaded streets and lanes till she reached a fourth-rate inn, with a flaming sign and a knot of idlers lounging about the entrance. As she entered, she met the landlord, bowing and smiling; but Miss Edgewcombe said curtly:

"I wish to see Mr. Oliver—Raymond Oliver."

"Yes, ma'am—yes, ma'am. Walk into the parlour." And he ushered her into a room, hung with red and blue paper, furnished with a few chairs and mirror, and a set of curtains, picked up at auction sales.

Like one in a dream, Agnes waited. The sound of an approaching footstep curled her blood with a strange dread; and when the door unclosed to admit Mr. Oliver, she was entirely speechless.

Little Kate's father was tall and slight, with her cast of features, her hair and eyes, and had once been undeniably a gentleman; for his whole appearance spoke of better days.

"Madam," he exclaimed, with freezing coldness, "what brings you here?"

"I came to inquire about little Katy."

"Little Fan, I presume, madam. Catherine and Katy are forbidden words in my presence—you are as dead to me as if you had slept in the grave a dozen years."

"Raymond Oliver, your child's heart turns to me, as some flowers follow the sunshine!"

"Say rather the shadow," retorted her companion, with the same scornful indifference; but the actress did not appear to heed it.

"Can nothing tempt you?" she continued, imploringly. "I love her. She has grown into my very heart since she has been with me. In God's name, I beg of you to grant the boon I crave!"

And she sank at his feet, sobbing out her frantic grief.

"Madam," rejoined Oliver, "do not put on tragedy airs; they are quite lost upon me."

With a wild, wailing cry, the woman lifted her face, and resumed:

"Let me, at least, see her once more for the last time; let me kiss her brow, her cheek, her sunny hair."

"You might as well plead with a stone. Never, with my consent, shall you meet the child again."

Thus the two parted, and the tragedienne returned, lonely and despairing, to her villa at Brompton.

The next day she had a long and confidential interview with Lillian Ethridge, and the subsequent week sailed for France.

CHAPTER XII

Alph. Your soul's most fervent love you'll give her?

Fant. Ay, from my heart!

Alph. All good and fair!

You'll talk of being true for ever;

Of one absorbing passion's glow,

Of one all-mastering conquering spell

You will dilate on to her—so:

Will this come from the heart as well? *Goethe.*

TIME rolled on, and Mrs. Lee's year of mourning had expired. The Italian was still absent; and, therefore, she ventured to mingle in the society where her reputed beauty and grace had already given her a kind of prestige. Her quiet house was thrown open to guests, and though as yet there had been no dancing, the elegant furniture which had been displayed at soirées, and the plate and china at dinners, were the town talk.

Nothing could have been more becoming than the rich satins and velvets of her second mourning, with their deep falls of lace, the dark purple robes she occasionally wore, and her jet and pearl ornaments; and no young beauty was more admired than Goldsworth Lee's widow. To younger women she was an object of dislike, perhaps envy; for it was by no means a pleasant thing to see gentlemen, whom they had fruitlessly endeavoured to win, in her train. At length her conquests began to be discussed at Madame Lennière's boarding-school.

Alice Hunt was passing through the seminary hall, when she chanced to hear a name to which she could never listen without a thrill of fond pride. Two young ladies, standing by the window, had spoken of her lover; and with all her senses sharpened to preternatural acuteness, she listened.

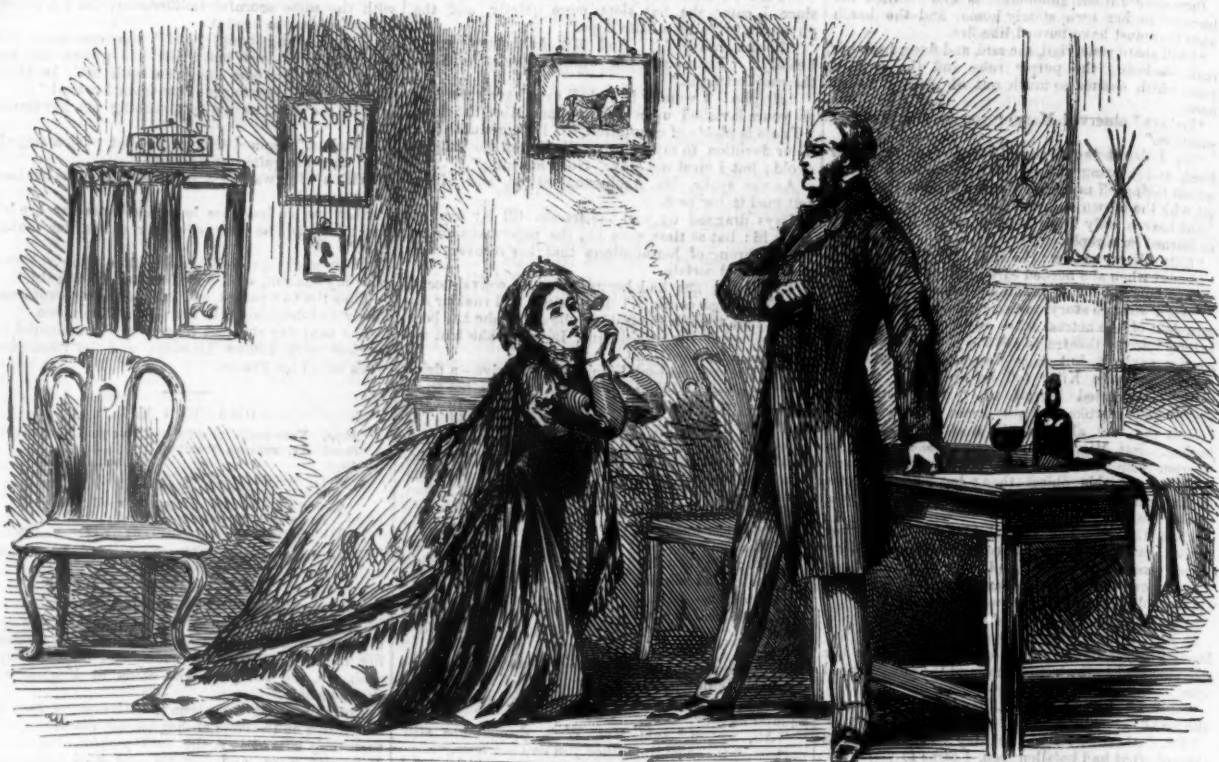
"Poor little dupe," observed one, glancing at her; "she probably thinks Edward Stanley a miracle of devotion, but she does not know how often he spends the evening at Mrs. Goldsworth Lee's."

"Can it be she has entangled him?" replied the other. "I have thought him an exception to the general rule, and did not even know he was acquainted with her."

"Oh, yes! when she was an obscure girl, living at the seaside, her father rescued him from drowning, and he was an inmate of their house for a week."

"You astonish me; but—hush! there she is, and she may hear us!"

Mechanically, Alice glided on to her room. Dora had gone into town to spend the Sabbath; but had she been present, the girl's sensitive nature would have kept the secret to herself. Heretofore she had implicitly trusted her lover, but those few words had aroused doubts and forebodings. It seemed mysterious to her that when she and Margaret Harding had referred to Mrs. Lee, he had not spoken of his previous acquaintances, and called on her ere she had left town. She recalled Sibly Lee's fine figure, her brilliant eyes, her wealth of jetty hair, the calm, inscrutable face, which might be more charming than girlhood's blushes; and her heart sank with sudden dread. He had not paid his accustomed visit, and she looked in vain for the letter which should have explained the cause of his absence. All these circumstances combined to deepen the impression which had been made upon her; and impelled by an irresistible impulse, she set out for town. Pale, silent, and desponding, she reached her destination. Her brain was in such a whirl that she scarcely knew what purpose had driven her forth, but she was conscious of a wild wish to be satisfied with regard to Edward Stanley, a resolve to trust nothing but the evidence of her senses. Her pulse beat quick as she thought of the hour when Margaret Harding had sent her to Mr. Goldsworth Lee's death-bed, and Sibly had told her it was then too late. Crouching down in the shadow of the stately walls, she watched, with a dreary feeling



[AGNES EDGEcombe IMPLORES FOR THE RETURN OF KATY.]

of desolation, to ascertain whether her lover's evenings were passed with the beautiful widow. She had not been there long when she heard a footstep which she would have recognized anywhere; then a musical voice humming a fragment of an opera song, and Edward Stanley bounded up the steps.

"God help me!" moaned the girl; "it is too true, too true—oh! what will life be to me now?"

With these words, she crept from her hiding-place, and tottered toward the humble home where she had been so happy the previous winter.

The house was closed; and on inquiring for Margaret Harding, she learned that she had gone to a remote part of the country to nurse her only brother, an eccentric old man, who had never cared for her till an alarming illness had fastened upon him.

What was to be done?

That night she spent with a poor woman in the immediate vicinity of her unpromising residence, and in the morning left suddenly.

It was a wild, gusty, spring day; a sleety rain was falling, and the wind moaned dismally. Still, Alice Hunt hurried on, with the desperate purpose of quitting the neighbourhood where she would be likely to encounter her false lover—flying, like a wounded deer, to find a refuge, where the pity that would have been so galling to her in her present mood could not reach her.

Night was closing in when she stood at the threshold of a fine family seat, where resided her greatest friend among the pupils of Madame Berniere.

Bertha St. John, an orphan girl, whose education had been entrusted to her relatives, was Alice's most intimate friend, and the only one to whom she could resolve to apply in the hour of need.

As the girl followed the servant into the wide hall, Bertha sprang to meet her, exclaiming:

"Why, Alice Hunt, what has happened?"

"To you I believe I can speak freely, Bertha; I am homeless, friendless, and have come to you for help."

Miss St. John started, and replied:

"Pray, have you and Mr. Stanley, the most exemplary of lovers, taken it into your heads to quarrel?"

"Yes; or, rather, he proved false."

"Tell me all—I cannot understand it."

Bitterly the girl repeated the particulars, with which our readers are familiar; the chance talk of her two schoolfellows, the sudden break in their correspondence, and what she had seen with her own eyes, adding:

"It would be mere folly for me to accept anything

more from his hands; I must quit school, and earn my bread again."

"Oh! Alice, Alice, I have a small fortune—let me share it with you."

"No, Bertha; though I thank you a thousand times for your generosity, I will not be a dependant. Besides, employment, steady employment, will be far better for me than idle repinings. You know the world—plan for me in this emergency."

"Your year at Madame Berniere's will be a great advantage to you in securing a situation; my sister employs a governess, and when I saw her last she wished to make a change. She's not like me. Bell is a leader of the fashion, and has different ideas from mine; but she pays a fair salary, and will, on my recommendation, treat you well. Like Mrs. Lee, she is a widow, and counts her admirers by the score."

"It will not do for me to be fastidious about little things; where does she live?"

"In London; she will be going to the country directly."

"Write to her immediately, I beg of you."

"I will; and in the meantime you must stay with me till we can hear from her."

The promised letter was written and despatched, and promptly they received an answer; Mrs. Lennard was heartily tired of Mademoiselle Duval's French airs, and glad to secure a substitute.

A week afterwards Alice found herself again amid the rush and roar of London; but as Bertha had accompanied her, she had not yet begun to feel the isolation which settles on us when we are strangers in a great city.

The morning subsequent to their arrival, as Bertha and Mrs. Lennard stood in the breakfast room, she said:

"Well, how do you like your new governess?"

"She seems a pleasant girl, and I've no doubt is qualified to teach the children, but—"

"But what?"

"I fear she's too pretty; one doesn't wish to find a rival in a governess, and that style takes amazingly with the gentlemen!" And shrugging her shoulders, Mrs. Lennard went walking away.

Bertha laughed, but she did not repeat the conversation to Alice; and yet it aroused misgivings, which had not vanished when she was obliged to leave. With a weary, homesick feeling, Alice watched the carriage that bore Bertha away; and in her loneliness, it seemed as if the last tie that bound her to brighter days was sundered. But kneeling in her chamber in those hours when the pulse of the city beat more softly, she prayed God to guide and protect her, and found strength and peace.

"Pray, Mrs. Lennard," observed one of the most eligible matches in town, as he was lounging in her opera-box, "what young friend have you staying with you, and why do you not introduce us poor fellows?"

"I do not understand you," replied the lady; "since my sister left I have had no visitors."

"And yet I saw a stranger with your children, watching the band from your balcony."

"Ah! it was my governess," said Mrs. Lennard.

"How fortunate you are to secure such a personage!"

Mrs. Lennard made some answer and changed the subject; but from that time Alice Hunt was regarded with envy and distrust. In various ways she managed to make her realize the distance between her and her employer, and when Mr. Rivers took every opportunity to meet her, begging the children to introduce him, and sending her by them knots of hot-house flowers, books to read, and new songs to learn, her rage knew no bounds. But she still hoped that the acquaintance would be broken off, when the family went into the country. Mrs. Lennard had a cottage in Newton, and there she determined to send Alice and her pupils.

It was in May that Mrs. Lennard's carriage would along the rough, hilly road leading to her rustic home. The young girl's eyes dilated with pleasure, for the orchards and thickets were starry with bloom; the grass was fresh and green, the sky cloudless, the whole landscape flushed with a soft tint, and the river flowed on below—broad, and calm, and deep, like a good man's heart. A zig-zag path, with occasional flights of stone steps, led from the high-road to the cottage—a quaint structure, with tall chimneys rising like minarets from the roof, dormer windows, and a porch, covered with woodbine and honeysuckle.

To Alice Hunt the quiet of the place was a relief, and she was soon domesticated with the housekeeper and gardener.

"What will you do," asked Mrs. Lennard, maliciously, "without Mr. Rivers' attentions?"

"Indeed, madam," rejoined Alice, "I shall be glad to be free from them; they were never acceptable to me."

"I'm glad to hear you speak thus, Miss Hunt; it is cruel for gentlemen to amuse themselves by flirting with every pretty girl they meet, and I shall tell Mr. Rivers so. As for me, I'm insufferably dull in Newton, and to-morrow I shall be on the wing."

She kept her word; but that afternoon, when she was hastening back to join her fashionable friends, Rivers startled Alice by his sudden and unexpected appearance.

(To be continued.)



[LADY BRANDON ESCAPES FROM THE BURNING CONVENT.]

THE BONDAGE OF BRANDON.

CHAPTER LXXI

This cold hand
Which now I stretch abroad towards you
You'll never touch again.

Barry Cornwall.

You stole her from me, like a thief you stole her
At dead of night.

Owey.

DARK, very dark—dark as pitch—was the July night which obscured the light of the moon and stars, and forbade them to shed their radiance over the little Spanish town of Madre de Dios.

At midnight the gloom was most profound.

With one or two exceptions, all the inhabitants slept. Dr. Narvaez was wakeful and restless; he had retired to bed, but a feeling of perturbation stole over him, and he rose again, as he found it impossible to close his eyes. Throwing open his drawing-room windows, he stepped out on the verandah, and tried to penetrate the murkiness of the atmosphere.

Suddenly a little spark of fire, no bigger than a falling star, shot athwart the horizon, and this the doctor attributed to some meteorological phenomenon, such as is continually taking place in eastern latitudes, where the air is never free from electricity, and where meteors are of common occurrence.

To the doctor's astonishment, this single spark was succeeded by a multitude of others, so that it seemed as if a great firework were being let off to celebrate some rejoicing or to mark the anniversary of some event notable in the annals of the town.

The darkness of the night made the supposed pyrotechnic exhibition more interesting, as the minutest scintillation of fire was distinctly visible on that black and stygian background.

The shower of sparks was succeeded by streaks of flame, which shot up into the night air with a persistent flicker.

It was clear that some edifice in the town was on fire. Rivetted to the spot with a strange fascination, Dr. Narvaez leaned over his balcony and drank in with avidity what was really becoming a magnificent spectacle. It appeared that he was at present the only spectator. In a short time the town was awake from its torpor by the deep booming of an alarm bell.

Boom, clang—boom, clang.

The sound of the bell arose in awful grandeur, and carried terror and dismay to the hearts of the people

of Madre de Dios, who sprang from their beds in consternation, and gazed at the fire, which was now assuming all the dimensions of a conflagration.

What building was it which was blazing away with a rapidity which was truly awful?

The doctor asked himself this question, but he was unable to make up his mind until the flames rose to such a prodigious height as to cast a ruddy glare over the town, and make everything as light as day.

Then he discovered that the fire originated in the convent of La Cyprise.

The rafters crackled, and huge iron-clamped beams fell to the ground with a crash loud enough to awaken the dead. The shrieks of the sisters rose upon the slight breeze, and were borne faintly to the shrinking ears of the townspeople.

Knowing that he could be of little use, the doctor remained where he was, and wondered whether it was possible to extinguish the fire. Apparently it was not. Fire engines were unknown in Madre de Dios; and as brick-work did not flourish in the immediate neighbourhood, owing to an absence of the primary ingredient, clay, most of the buildings—including the one now in process of consumption—were made of wood.

It was clearly impossible that the fire could be arrested and got under until the entire block of buildings was destroyed. Then it might be prevented from spreading and burning the town down to the edge of the water on the beach.

Of course, the confusion was very great. All that those in the convent could do was to make their way to the street, and there await the instructions of their superiors.

The thoroughfare in which the convent was situated was crowded with black-robed nuns, who were quickly accommodated with privacy and seclusion, of a temporary nature, in neighbouring houses, placed at their disposal by the inmates.

There was no crying or sobbing amongst those who were so rudely expelled. They had not to deplore the loss of property or to regret the destruction of a home. Any place, so long as it kept out the wind of heaven and was a protection against the variations of the weather, was a home to them.

Reginald Welby was still in Madre de Dios. Twenty-four hours had not elapsed since his separation from his wife, and he had remained in the town, endeavouring to devise some means for her liberation. The noise of the conflagration warned him of what was going on, and springing from his bed, he hastily attired himself, and sought the scene of devastation, with a view of rendering what assistance he could to his

imprisoned wife, whose life, he thought, might be in peril.

In the hour of danger there was little or no discipline, and Reginald ran about the courtyard as freely as every one else who had been attracted to the spot by the novelty of the spectacle.

Suddenly a dark body sprang forward from the crowd, and catching hold of Reginald by the arm, exclaimed:

"Reginald, my own, do you not know me?"

He recognized his wife's voice, but, clad as she was in dark and sombre vestments, he had failed to distinguish her from those by whom he was surrounded.

Taking off a light coat he wore, he, with great presence of mind, threw it over her shoulders, and without a word further, hurried her along the streets of Madre de Dios, in the direction of the sea.

Having reached the beach, they stopped, and shrinking into the shadow of an angle of the wall, Reginald said:

"My heart is almost too full for utterance. I have been nearly distracted since I was compelled to part from you."

"Imagine my despair," replied Lady Brandon.

"I can."

She trembled so violently that Reginald fancied her overwrought nerves were about to give way.

"Why do you tremble so much, my darling?" he asked.

"Oh, Reginald!" she replied, while the tears streamed down her cheeks in torrents; "oh! the misery I have gone through and endured in so short a time is indescribable. I thought myself cut off from the world for ever, and separated from you for an eternity. Even now I have the greatest difficulty in bringing myself to believe that what has happened within the last hour is not a dream. Is it all true, Reginald? Tell me. Is the fire a fact? Am I labouring under a delusion? Oh, no, no!—I can see I am not! It is really your dear voice, and your loved hand which is circling my waist. Thank heaven! I have not deserved so much happiness."

Reginald spoke to his wife in an encouraging manner; but the painful necessities of the case compelled him to be practical.

"We are not yet out of danger, my love!" he said.

"Are we not?"

"Alas! no! I wish I could speak more assuringly."

"Shall I be followed?"

"I hope not."

"Save me, Reginald! Save me!" she cried, wildly.

"I have been restored to your arms almost by a miracle, and you must save me. Promise me, Reginald, that, whatever betides us, you will not let me leave your side again."

There was a frantic eagerness about this touching appeal which went direct to Reginald Welby's heart.

"Poor thing! how she must have suffered!" he muttered to himself.

"No, dearest," he replied. "You shall never leave me again, I promise you."

He knew that he was promising what he could not guarantee; but, in his opinion, there was no harm in trying to calm her by saying what, if untrue, was a very venial fiction.

"Thanks, thanks!" exclaimed Lady Brandon, looking up gratefully in his eyes. "You have rolled a stone from my heart, and lifted a mountain from my mind. Oh! Reginald, if I were to tell you of the horrors I have gone through—the solitude, the darkness, the hunger and thirst; but, no, I will not tell you. It would only make you miserable and incapable of guarding me. Let me turn from what is now the past, and help you to concentrate your ideas upon the present."

"That is much the best course," he said.

"What do you propose, dear Reginald?" Lady Brandon continued.

How affectionate she could be in the moment of danger, and in the hour of misery! How her pride vanished and her haughtiness disappeared, whilst her overweening pride seemed to be entirely extinguished! "What I propose is simply this. My hotel is within a few yards of where we are standing—"

"Yes."

"You are more collected and more yourself now."

"Oh, yes!"

"That is why I brought you here, instead of taking you direct to the hotel. We shall enter unobserved, for you may be sure that every one is half-mad about the fire."

"I should think so."

"I have ascertained that the steamer which took us from Gibraltar, and which went on to Cadiz after leaving us here, will, on its return voyage, stop at Madre de Dios, at four o'clock this morning."

"That is to say, in three hours time."

"Exactly."

"Oh! that is delightful. Can we, do you think, embark, and get away from here?"

"I hope and trust so."

Blanche pressed her husband's hand affectionately, and tried to think she really loved him.

"But, my dear," she cried.

Reginald looked perplexed.

"That will be an insuperable difficulty."

"Certainly not," Reginald replied, as an idea struck him.

"What do you mean?"

"That I can extricate you from this dilemma."

"In what way?"

"By dressing you in more every-day garments."

"Can you, indeed? Where will you get them? Have you made friends with some Spanish donna?"

"Oh! no."

"Tell me, then!" she cried, impatiently.

"Were not your own boxes sent with my luggage to the hotel?" he replied.

"Oh! to be sure. How foolish I am to forget that. Come, let us at once get into the hotel, and effect the transformation. I feel like an actress who has appeared in a new character for one night only, and I assure you I do not feel the least inclination to repeat the performance."

Yielding to his wife's solicitation, Reginald emerged from the secluded place he had selected for his conference, and made his way into the hotel without being perceived; as all the officials, with the exception of a drowsy porter, who was redolent of garlic, had gone to the fire.

When Lady Brandon found herself in the privacy of her husband's apartment, she threw her arms round his neck, and letting her head drop upon his shoulder, exclaimed:

"Oh! my darling, darling Reginald! I will love you for ever and ever for your kindness to me this night. My God! what should I have done without you? I have never loved you as I ought to have loved you; but now you shall see that my heart is warm, and capable of entertaining and fostering an intense affection. Let me once get away from this hateful place, and my whole existence shall be devoted to you."

Reginald's heart palpitated beneath the impassioned embrace his wife bestowed upon him, and he murmured softly:

"My own sweet pet. I wish for no reward. I am sure of your love, and the mere fact of having saved you is quite sufficient to reward me, for I shall never cease to congratulate myself for having done so as long as I live."

In the meantime a frightful tragedy was being

enacted in the burning convent. Although some had escaped, all were not so fortunate.

In the narrow cell in which he was confined, De Cannes heard the furnace-like raging of the fire, and trembled. The shrieks of women, and the heavy crashing of the falling timbers, too plainly evidenced the nature of the catastrophe which at first threatened to engulf so many victims.

A creeping terror took possession of De Cannes; and as his blood curdled, his hair partially erected itself.

He was so helpless.

A dense fuliginous smoke began to pervade the corridor and rolled along towards him like a huge sheet of destroying vapour, plague impregnated, or heavy with malaria; but it was charged with something worse than either plague or malaria, for against these scourges there is an appeal if the surgeon is skilful and heaven is merciful. The vaporous cloud was charged with death.

It carried suffocation in its choking folds, and from that there was no appeal.

The count placed his face to the aperture of his prison, and screamed aloud in his awful agony.

"Help me!" he shouted; "let me out! Help, help, I say! For the love of God, help or I perish! Let me out! Help! Help!"

Exhausted by his frantic efforts, he fell back against the wall; and as he moved he could hear the bones of the skeleton crunching and smashing beneath his iron-shod heel.

Nothing but a smothered echo replied to his noisy summons, and he concluded that he was abandoned to his fate.

His past life floated before him—he thought of the time when he had lived happily with his wife, and might have continued to do so had it not been for his suspicious nature, which for ever ruined his felicity. He thought of the exigencies which had made him nothing better than a common swindler; and how, at the commencement of his career, he had dubbed himself the Count de Cannes, when that high-sounding title had no foundation except in his own prolific brain and his own fertile imagination.

He was an Englishman by birth, and his real name, as already known, John Zelders.

His last hour was approaching, and he was too much occupied with the contemplation of the terrible death before him to overwhelm himself with reproaches for having practised an act of deception upon the credulous.

He made a final effort to escape from death. Raising his hands as well as the confined space would let him, he beat against the door until his blood-stained flesh sufficiently testified to the severity of his efforts.

At length, shrieking like a madman, howling like a wild beast, and foaming at the mouth, he placed his back against the wall, and, putting his feet against the door, he endeavoured by a series of frantic exertions to force it open.

Every fibre in his frame quivered, every muscle trembled, his joints cracked.

Ha! The old woodwork moves. It gives; it yields yet a little further. Bravo! Another effort, and another on the top of that, and the door falls outward with a crash.

A maniacal glare dances in the count's eyes, for he is free, and can hardly bring himself to believe in the glorious certainty.

There was no time to be lost in reflection, for the smoke now volleyed up from that part of the convent which was on fire, and stopped the count's respiration.

His only chance was to dart along the passage, defy the smoke, and trust to fortune to enable him to descend the grand staircase, which led to the courtyard below.

Like a man blindfolded, feeling the walls with his hands, he began his perilous journey. Having reached the top of the staircase, he found that the lower portion was in flames.

His only chance was to dash through the fiery element, and trust to accident. He could not now retrace his steps, and if he remained long where he was, he would fall down in all the agonies and throes of suffocation.

Being a man of quick perceptions, he was not long in considering the best course to pursue.

With all the alertness of which he was possessed, he began the descent; but before he had gone more than a dozen steps, the back of the staircase broke, and he was precipitated into the burning, crackling, seething mass of fire below.

Even then he might have escaped at the expense of many a severe burn had not the violence with which he fell stunned him.

The flames seized hold of him, and licked his countenance with their forked tongues, and devoured every atom of clothing with which he was invested, leaving him nothing but a charred mass, an unrecognizable cinder.

When the fire had exhausted its fury, those who went amongst the ashes to see the extent of damage done came upon the remains of a human being. The body was blackened and dried up. The legs were drawn up as if the agony of the last moment had contracted the muscles.

This melancholy satire on human existence was all that remained of the once gay, clever, and frivolous Count de Cannes.

Both Sir Lawrence Allingford and himself had found a grave in the ill-omened town of Madre de Dios.

Amongst the various charming stories of eastern romance is one which tells of a mountain of lost-sons, sufficiently powerful to attract ships, and draw their rivets from them until every nail is extracted, and the hapless ship sinks to the bottom.

Lady Brandon very much resembled this disastrous mountain, for all those who came into hostile contact with her were sure to die, or meet with some horrible misfortune.

At last the morning broke, and a blood-red sun cast upon the piled up clouds what may be called a gory splendour, as if typical of the night's work.

Sister Inez had joined Dr. Narvaez in the balcony, and together they had watched the progress of the conflagration with the deepest interest.

"My husband, doctor!" said Inez. "Do you think—"

She broke off, for she was unable to utter the dreadful question which trembled upon her lips; but Dr. Narvaez knew what she was about to say.

"Let us hope the best," he replied, solemnly.

"Would they leave him to perish?"

"Not willingly."

"He is in danger. Your words tell me that he is in danger!"

"When a fire like this breaks out, there is always danger."

"Let me go to him!" cried Inez. "He risked much to save me; let me do what I can for him in return."

She moved towards the door.

Dr. Narvaez did not attempt to restrain her, because he knew that she had over-estimated her strength.

He was right. Before she could reach the door of the apartment, her limbs gave way beneath her, and she fell with a moan upon the carpet.

The doctor laid her upon a sofa, and said:

"Be patient, my poor child. I will go and seek information for you."

"You will do all you can for him, doctor, will you not?" she replied, pleadingly. "Let me have that assurance from you before you go."

"I will."

"Remember that all the jeopardy and danger in which he is placed arose entirely from his chivalrous devotion to me. Had he not endeavoured to rescue me, he would have been at this moment a free man. Oh, indeed, my best and heartfelt thanks are his, and I trust he may once more come before me, so that I may have an opportunity of thanking him."

"I will not be longer than I can help," the doctor said.

"I shall await your return with feverish impatience."

Dr. Narvaez pressed her hand with warmth, and sallied into the street. Numbers of people were passing to and fro, for all Madre de Dios was aroused. The conflagration was at an end now, and nothing remained of it but a heap of smouldering rafters and smoking ashes. Its further ravages and devastations had been stayed by the ruthless energy of the authorities, which had caused several houses on each side of the devoted building to be pulled down, which had at once been done. Then the fire was allowed to burn itself out, and die a natural death.

Dr. Narvaez met several priests with whom he was acquainted, and asked them if their captive had escaped. They one and all shook their heads, and he left the scene of devastation, firmly convinced that the ill-fated Count de Cannes had perished.

"Well!" exclaimed Inez, as he entered the room. The doctor made no answer.

"Speak," she cried.

"I—I could find no traces of him," the doctor replied evasively.

"He is dead! He is dead! I know it," Inez said, sorrowfully. "Oh! why am I alive while he has perished? Would I had been taken sooner than he. Oh! my husband, my husband; I shall soon follow thee!"

Dr. Narvaez drew a chair close to the sofa, and sitting down, began to talk to Inez in an encouraging manner.

"You must not give way to your feelings," he said; "all may be well yet."

"No, no!" she replied with a sorrowful shake of the head.

"I merely told you that I could hear nothing of him. Were he, as you suppose, among the dead, his body would have been found."

"Oh, no!" said Inez: "I am not a child, Dr. Narvaez. I know that the flames are a sure destroyer; they leave no trace behind them but a heap of ashes; and human remains, when pulverized by fire, present very little difference to those of wood, or any other inanimate substance."

"You are hasty."

"It is kind of you to try to persuade me to the contrary, but I am positive my husband is dead. I fancy his spirit is flitting around me now."

A dim film came over her eyes as she spoke, and her face assumed a death-like pallor.

Dr. Narvaez became alarmed.

"Are you not well?" he said.

"I am very ill," she murmured faintly.

"What are your symptoms?"

"You cannot aid me."

"I will try, at least," he cried.

She grasped him by the wrist with all her remaining strength, and in a hollow voice exclaimed:

"I am dying, doctor."

"Dying!" he repeated.

"Yes."

"Of what?"

"A broken heart."

The film over her eyes became more dense and glassy, and her breath came at intervals, and it was evident that she had spoken the truth.

Dr. Narvaez felt her pulse, which was so languid that it scarcely beat at all.

She was sinking fast.

Suddenly Inez started up with an energy that no one would have given her credit for, and pointing wildly with her outstretched hand, cried in a weird, unearthly voice:

"See, see!"

Dr. Narvaez followed her gaze, but saw nothing.

"It is he!" she exclaimed. "He calls me! He is beckoning me! I come, I come! My husband calls me, and I hasten to obey his mandate!"

With a faint murmur on her lips, which sounded like "I come, I come!" her spirit passed from earth to heaven.

Dr. Narvaez wiped a tear from his eye, and gently drew the edge of her shawl over her poor, pale face, from which all evidence of vitality had fled.

CHAPTER LXXII

But oh! what storm was in that mind! what strife!
Crabbe.

WHEN the footman at Welby House opened the door, George Littleboy stalked in, and with all the assurance of which his somewhat audacious nature was possessed, approached Miss Zedfern.

"Delighted to meet you again, and more especially delighted to see you so soon!" he exclaimed.

Mimi looked blankly at him.

Mr. Webster retired to a discreet distance: he was well trained, and knew that his presence within at least a dozen yards of a lady and gentleman, when they were conversing, would be an impertinence, unless he was stationed behind their chair at dinner. Yet he was careful to be at hand should Miss Zedfern apply to him for help and assistance, which he thought far from improbable.

"Travelling at this time of the year is quite pleasant," George continued.

"To you, sir, it may be," Mimi replied, turning paler than before.

"It would have been kind of you to have left word at your hotel that you had gone into the country to see your friends the Welbys, because you must have known that I should inquire for you."

"As I did not want to see you," Mimi replied, with emphasis, "I did not say where I was going."

"And yet I found out."

"A gentleman would not have prosecuted his inquiries any further."

"I have told you before that I am not a gentleman, in your sense of the word," said George, with a tinge of displeasure in his voice.

"I do not want to be told that," she answered, in a sarcastic tone.

"I am not noble by birth," he added.

"No?" she said, as if unaware of the fact until it was decidedly announced to her.

"I daresay, though, that my parentage is as good as most peoples."

"Do you think so?"

"Yes. I have only one misfortune to lament."

"Pray, what is that?"

"There is no Count de Cannes in the family."

It was now Mimi's turn to bite her lips.

"The count is nothing to me," she exclaimed.

"That remains to be proved."

"I am at a loss to conjecture why you should so persistently couple his name with mine?"

"Because we have our suspicions."

"Who are we?"

"My father and myself."

"And why do you interest yourselves in matters that do not concern you?"

"They do concern us."

"I am unable to discern in what way they can interest you," Mimi exclaimed.

"We are the Earl of Brandon's solicitors."

"Well!"

"Is not that sufficient?"

"Perhaps I am very dense. At all events, I cannot admit that as a valid reason for your being the busy-body-general of the county."

"The earl has been robbed."

"I have your word for it."

"It is undeniable."

"Since you say so, I suppose it is."

Mimi was evidently calling all her sarcastic powers into play.

"You cannot refuse to admit it."

"My dear sir," Mimi said, "I know nothing about the nobleman you mention, except that he is very ill. His affairs are a dead letter to me, and I know no more about them than I should about a Chaldean abracadabra."

"Very well," George Littleboy replied; "as you find the subject distasteful, we will change it. I did not come here to talk about the Earl of Brandon's affairs, but about yours."

"Be as brief as you can."

"I see no reason for being brief."

"I do," she replied, laughingly.

"Let me hear it."

"My friends will wonder what I have to say to—"

"Go on."

"To a common man like yourself."

"Common man, as you call me," George said, bitterly, "I can tell you one thing."

"What is that?"

"I shall some day be your husband."

"Oh dear! no."

"I am positive."

"So am I to the contrary."

"I would stake my life on it."

"Not a very valuable stake."

"Why not?"

"Oh, I hardly know—ask yourself," Mimi replied, with a supercilious look.

"You think my life is not worth much?" George said, with rising anger.

"What do you think yourself?"

"I have great hopes of it."

"You should be the best judge."

"I believe in my future, Miss Zedfern," George said. "I have industry, good health, and a certain amount of talent. With these qualifications I ought to get on."

"You said you would stake your life on the chance of becoming my husband?"

"Yes."

"It would be a pity to do that."

"Why?"

"Because if you lost, you might cheat the hangman."

This was a coarse remark; but the detestation with which Mimi regarded George Littleboy was so great that her hatred carried her away, and made her occasionally unladylike.

"But I cannot lose," George replied.

"How do you know that?"

"I have powerful weapons to fight with."

"What are they?"

"A few legal documents to begin with."

"Indeed!"

"I have one called a warrant."

"For what?"

"Your arrest."

Mimi almost lost her self-possession at this declaration.

"My arrest!" she said. "On what grounds? Why am I to be arrested?"

"Because of your complicity with the Count de Cannes."

"You cannot prove it."

"I think differently," George exclaimed, with a confident smile.

He drew the legal documents from his pocket, saying:

"At all events, here is the warrant which gives an officer the power of arresting you."

Mimi was quick-witted, and this remark put her upon her guard. Had George Littleboy said "I am empowered to arrest you; you must come with me," she would not have disputed his jurisdiction; but when he said "an officer," she had her doubts about the legality of the arrest should George Littleboy make it.

"You are not an officer!" she exclaimed.

"I am very well aware of the fact," George replied, coolly.

"Then you cannot arrest me."

"Why not?"

"Because you are not a police-officer."

"That does not matter."

"You lay yourself open to an action," Mimi continued.

"I will run the risk of that."

"Do you not see that you will be acting illegally?"

"Possibly. I should have brought a policeman with me; but as I omitted that salutary precaution, I must act in the capacity of a guardian of the public myself."

"Have you no pride about you?" Mimi said.

"Very little."

"You are a juvenile Jonathan Wild."

"Oh, no! this is my first essay in thief-taking;" George Littleboy replied, with equanimity.

Mimi's attempt at ridicule recoiled upon herself, and although she did not know it, George had the best of her by his last hit.

Mimi covered her face with her hands and burst into tears; however confident and impudent a woman may be, there is always a limit to her endurance. When she finds herself defeated, she shows that she has her weaknesses like the rest of her sex, and tears come to her assistance. It is problematic whether passionate women could live at all without tears. They would explode in a species of spontaneous expansion, by being too much inflated with their own ill-temper.

At this moment Alice Welby and her father came up.

Mr. Welby was a pompous old gentleman, deputy-lieutenant and high sheriff for the county. He was the king of javelin men, and always made a point of entertaining the judges of assize when they were on circuit. He was pleased to say that the judges and members of the bar (on the Midland Circuit) were the nicest and most gentlemanly fellows it had ever been his good fortune to come in contact with.

He had a great regard for Mimi, and when he saw her crying he was much concerned. Looking sternly at George Littleboy, he exclaimed:

"Who are you, sir, and to what am I indebted for the honour of this visit?"

"I did not come to see you," replied George Littleboy, who was slightly put out of temper by Mimi's remarks and reproaches, and not inclined to be civil to anybody.

"But, sir," cried Mr. Welby, "as you are in my house, I have a right to demand why you are here."

"You may demand as much as you like, but you won't know until I choose to tell you."

Mr. Welby put his eyeglass to his eye, and regarded Mr. Littleboy with great curiosity. He had never been treated so cavalierly in his own house. Seeing that any further pressure would only result in renewed contumely, he addressed himself to Mimi.

"Really, Miss Zedfern, I must admit that I am surprised—I may say surprised beyond measure—to hear such disrespectful remarks from a young man, who, I presume, is here for the purpose of seeing you. If I have formed an erroneous impression, pray contradict me, and put me right; but I cannot help thinking that your agitation and your tears are caused by the same description of lingual brutality and disrespect to which I have myself been subjected."

Had Mr. Welby been making a speech at an after-dinner display of eloquence, he could not have spoken with more gravity or deliberation.

"I hope, Mr. Welby, you will protect me from this man's violence," Mimi said, recovering her serenity in a limited degree at finding herself not altogether unprotected.

"Nothing, my dear young lady, will give me greater pleasure," replied the old gentleman, blandly.

"I have been persecuted by him for some time," Mimi continued.

"Indeed!"

"Allow me, Mr. Welby, to say a few words," George interrupted.

"Presently, sir."

"I wish to explain."

"Let Miss Zedfern state her case, and then I shall be happy to hear you," rejoined Mr. Welby.

"He declares," Mimi said, "that I have been an accomplice in a robbery."

"What?" cried Mr. Welby, aghast.

"His only foundation for the accusation, however," Mimi added, "is, that I was acquainted with a gentleman who was staying at the Priory at the time the alleged robbery took place."

"Absurd on the face of it," Mr. Welby said.

"It may be so, in your estimation," George exclaimed; "but your opinion upon a matter of this kind is of little importance."

"I am a justice of the peace."

"I am glad to hear it."

"Why?" demanded Mr. Welby.

"For this reason: As you are a magistrate for the county, I request you to assist me in the capture of Mimi Zedfern."

"For what offence?"

"That of robbery. She has already stated that I accuse her of being an accomplice in the great diamond robbery at the Priory."

"Show me your authority for the arrest."

George Littleboy drew the warrant from his pocket, and handed it to Mr. Welby, who perused it carefully. When he reached the end, he said:

"This document is perfectly legal. It is signed by a London magistrate, and empowers the police to arrest one Mimi Zedfern on the within stated charge, which, in all material points, coincides with what Mr. — (I beg pardon, I am unacquainted with your name)."

"Littleboy," said George.

"Mr. Littleboy has already advanced."

"Do you refuse to aid me now?"

"Happy as I should be to assist Miss Zedfern, I am afraid that my position in the county as a justice of the peace would suffer were I to offer any opposition to the course of justice in this instance."

"Oh, papa," Alice Welby cried, "you cannot believe Miss Zedfern guilty of what this man says?"

"I do not place the slightest credence in his assertion," Mr. Welby replied. "He has put a document in my hands, which is, to all appearance, authentic. In my official capacity I am unable to disregard it."

"It must be false," Alice said.

"Very likely; yet, until the falsity of it is proved, I am powerless to interfere, except in an adverse manner."

"Must Mimi go to—prison?" asked Alice.

"I fear she must for the present, until she can obtain bail."

"But you will give bail for her, papa?"

"Yes, my dear; with pleasure."

"Must she undergo the annoyance and degradation of going to Kirkdale with Mr. Littleboy?"

"If I could avoid such a contingency—" Mr. Welby began.

"Oh, do try, papa!" Alice cried, in a tone of entreaty.

She was much attached to Mimi, and the idea of her being dragged to a jail by one whom she immediately put down as a coarse, vulgar fellow, was excruciating to her.

"If Mr. Littleboy would kindly listen to any solicitation of mine," Mr. Welby added, "I should be happy to make—"

"Your interference is useless, Mr. Welby!" George exclaimed. "The lady in whose welfare you take so much interest has given me the slip so often, that now I have found her, and now I have the proper and requisite documents in my pocket, I am not disposed to lose sight of her."

"Do you mean to assert that I should forfeit Mr. Welby's bail were he to offer it in my behalf?" Mimi exclaimed.

"I do not think you would be very particular," George replied.

"I must protest against this sort of conversation, Mr. Littleboy!" cried Mr. Welby. "It may be all very well in Chancery Lane, and Doctors' Commons, and places of that kind; but at present you are in a country gentleman's house. My father and myself have lived here for some hundred years, and I really cannot permit a lady to be insulted as long as she is under my roof."

"She insults me. Am I not to retaliate?" George exclaimed.

"Certainly not. I am an old man now, Mr. Littleboy, and you are a young one. Well, in my young days I was at a public school. At public schools no one, however ill-bred and all that, was permitted to insult a woman."

"Notwithstanding the provocation."

"No amount of provocation, sir, can justify intemperate language when employed to a lady."

"We were speaking of women," George said, coarsely.

"Women, if you please, sir. I meant to include the entire sex."

"I beg to differ with you."

"Oh! I am quite prepared for that," Mr. Welby continued; "but, permit me one moment more. I afterwards went to Oxford. There we preserved the same rule. No one insulted women. If a man was attacked by a woman in a vulgar manner, a little suavity, a few light words were all he employed in return. I am sorry to see that the present generation is not so particular in a most important respect as the one which is on the wane."

"This conversation is wasting your time and my own, Mr. Welby," George exclaimed.

"I don't think so."

"Possibly not. Old gentlemen, who remember the Regent, and have bowed to William, the sailor king, are apt occasionally to be garrulous."

"Sir!"

"Allow me to speak; I have a warrant, as you

know, for Miss Zedfern's arrest. It is my duty to take her to the county lock-up. If you are disposed to bail her, you can do so; but I call upon you, in your capacity of justice of the peace, to give me every assistance you can."

Mr. Welby ruminated for a brief space, and then turning to Mimi, said:

"I am afraid I cannot at present do anything for you, Miss Zedfern, beyond placing my carriage at your disposal. The very best thing you can do will be to accompany this gentleman to Kirkdale. I will follow you speedily, and no doubt my influence in the county will suffice to gain your liberation."

"You are very kind, Mr. Welby," Mimi said. "I am, as I need hardly tell you, entirely innocent of the charge brought against me."

"Do not say a word. I believe you are either the victim of a mistake or of a foul conspiracy."

"You will, at least, allow me to go to my room to dress myself?" Mimi exclaimed.

"If Mr. Welby will be answerable for your reappearance," replied George.

"Certainly. I will undertake that the lady will reappear," Mr. Welby said, loftily.

Mimi went up-stairs, accompanied by Alice, and attired herself in travelling costume.

When she reached the hall again, the carriage was at the door. With great politeness, Mr. Welby handed Mimi in, and shut to the door.

George Littleboy presented himself and said:

"Open the door!"

"I am not a lacquey, sir!" Mr. Welby cried.

"I did not speak to you, but to your servants."

"My servants will not admit you to my carriage."

"Why not? I have a right to accompany my prisoner."

"You may ride in the rumble or on the box."

"I prefer the inside."

"I am sorry for you, then."

"She might escape."

"How is that possible, when you sit behind in the

dickey and command a view of each side of the carriage?"

"Mr. Welby!" exclaimed Mimi's voice from inside.

He approached the window.

"Let him ride inside. I do not mind."

"Are you sure?"

"Quite! Let him come in. He cannot annoy me more than I have already been annoyed."

Mr. Welby made a sign to the footman, and the door was opened.

"Would you like Alice or myself to accompany

you?" Mr. Welby asked.

"Many thanks for your kindness, but I am not afraid. I will not trouble you."

"If the charge should be entertained at Kirkdale, do not omit to send for me at once."

"I will not."

"You shall not long remain in prison."

"Your friendship is a great consolation to me under great affliction," Mimi replied.

With a view of cutting the conversation short, George sprang into the carriage, and the footman shut the door.

He seated himself on the opposite side to that on which Mimi was sitting, and looked at her with a glance of triumph.

Just as the carriage was starting, Mr. Welby exclaimed to the footman:

"Richard, if Miss Zedfern should so much as tap at the window for your assistance, get down instantly, and horsewhip the fellow within an inch of his life."

"Yes, sir."

"Mind what I say; I will hold you harmless."

The carriage drove off, and George Littleboy and Mimi were alone.

(To be continued.)

WHY ANIMALS TO BE EATEN MUST BE KILLED.—

It is universally understood that animals which die from disease are not fitted for our markets. It is also understood that when cattle have been overdriven, their meat is notably inferior to that of healthy animals, unless they are permitted to recover their exhausted energies before being slaughtered. Why is this? The first and most natural supposition respecting those which die from disease is that their flesh is tainted; but it has been found that prolonged agony or exhaustion is quite as injurious, though in these cases there is no taint of disease. M. Claude Bernard propounds the following explanation:—"In all healthy animals, no matter to what class they belong, or on what food they subsist, he finds a peculiar substance analogous to vegetable starch existing in their tissues, and especially in their liver. This substance, glycogen or liver-sugar, is abundant in proportion to the vigour and youth of the animal, and disappears entirely under the prolonged suffering of pain or disease. This disappearance is singularly rapid in fish, and is always observed in the spontaneous

death of animals. But when the death is sudden, none of it disappears. In a rabbit, killed after suffering pain for five or six hours, no trace was found of the sugar-forming principle, and its flesh had a marked difference in flavour. The same remark applies to exhausted, overdriven animals; their muscles are nearly deficient in glycogen, and yield a decidedly larger percentage of water than muscle in normal condition. If, Bernard likewise finds that animals suffocated lose more of this sugar-forming substance than similar animals killed in the slaughter-house. To this let us add the fact, that the blood of overdriven animals will not coagulate, or coagulates very slowly and imperfectly, and we shall see good reason for exercising some circumspection over the practices of our meat-markets.—*Animal Scientific Discovery.*

ALL ALONE.

By E. D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH,

Author of "The Hidden Hand," "Self-Made," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XLVII

THE LOST FOUND.

No more alone through this world's wilderness,
Although I trod the paths of high intent,
I journeyed now; no more companionless,
Where solitude is like despair, I went. Shelley.

At length Genevieve and Theodora returned home again, and Austin was there to meet them.

It seemed to him that Genevieve was less brilliant than formerly. The far-reaching, vivid lightning of her eyes seemed called back, and now those once flashing orbs shone with a still, starlike radiance, and the tones of her voice were less elastic, but smoother, calmer, sweeter than formerly.

For the rest, she was paler and quieter.

But Theodora!

He was at once struck with the change in her, which every movement and gesture revealed, exciting ever-increasing surprise.

Could this graceful woman, whose every motion was full of grace, whose countenance was sparkling with vivacity—could this be the once pale, dejected little cripple? Had her long living with Genevieve affected this change?

And they, on their part, noticed a sad and blighting change in him. They had expected to find him altered, worn, and haggard. But, ah! the change was not that produced by sorrow or humiliation, but something more deplorable.

The marks upon his altered brow were not only those of grief, but excess.

As Genevieve gazed for a moment upon him, the keenest pang that had ever entered her bosom now wrung her heart.

The man before her was really Austin, but how altered! There were the same classic features, the same graceful and distinguished form.

Something was missing though from the expression of his eyes and the tones of his voice.

Alas! the purity of both was gone. There was a certain thickness and huskiness in the deep-toned voice, once so pure; a certain semiopacity in the dark and impassioned eyes, once clear as those of childhood; a turbidity over the rich complexion, once transparent as that of womanhood, and a bloated look about the finely-cut features.

Yes, he was changed—changed, indeed; and the change was instantly noticed by those two loving women.

Theodora's soul recoiled from one who had once been all in all to her.

"I drew a portrait of you from recollection, when we were away," she said. "I will show it to you to-morrow."

He went to see it, and found Theodora in the study, alone.

The portrait stood on an easel, and Theodora stood by its side, with her arm thrown over her work, and her head reclined as though in weariness or dejection.

Austin stood before the work, in silence. It was a beautiful picture, but a highly spiritualized one.

A rush of strong feeling darkened the pale face of the erring man, and, in a deep and thrilling voice, he said:

"It is what I aspired to be!" and buried his face in his hands.

"Theodora, my angel girl!" he cried, catching at her hand, "have faith in me. I know that my faults almost break your loving heart, but I am changed from this hour. Put me on no longer probation, dear girl, but take me as I am; and I pledge myself, in the sight of heaven, never to cause that gentle heart of yours a pain. Can you trust me?"

What did she say?

She spoke not; but, for answer, placed her hand in his.

And as she did so, through her falling tears, smiled sweetly on him.

A young author sat alone in his poor chamber. It was, as has been said, a third storey back room, with but one window, overlooking a confined prospect of old chimneys, dingy roofs, dilapidated dormer windows, murky walls rising above pent and aqualid yards and reeking alleys, and all the abominations of the most wretched spot in the disheartening heart of the city.

Before this window, Wakefield, the once famous author, sat writing.

A dingy blind, half-drawn up, admitted a sort of smoky light. No vision of rising or setting sun ever gladdened this scene.

The old chair in which he sat, the old table at which he wrote, a discoloured rag of carpet, a rickety cot bedstead, a rude bookshelf—the work of his own hands—and a very handsome travelling trunk, a relic of past prosperity, comprised the whole furniture of this comfortless room.

This chamber had not even the merit of quietness and seclusion. The adjoining front room was tenanted by a poor labouring family; and the cries and squabbles of the confined and fretted children, and the scoldings and complaints of the vexed and wearied mother, were almost as unceasing as they were intolerable.

But now, as he sat before his writing-table, unable to concentrate his thoughts upon the subject in hand, it was not because a little bedlam raved without, but because the thronging memories of the past erased all else from his mind.

He knew that she was in London.

He had not directly or indirectly sought her presence, yet he had seen her, and beautiful fair-browed starry eyes seemed ever bending over him.

It had not needed that vision, though, to revive her vision; that bright presence had never for an instant faded from that constant heart.

He, too, believed in the eternal marriage of souls destined to each other; but it is a wasting of the vital energies of man to try to live only upon abstractions, however bright.

There were times when, for one warm clasp of Genevieve's thrilling hand, he would have forgone a hundred years of that far-off eternal union.

He sat now feeding upon the memories of the past, recalling his first vision of her in his country home. Then in his after years, when he awoke to the one grand passion of his life—when he hastened after fame and riches that he might purchase approach to something like equality with her—the agony of impatience he suffered then, lest his youth should pass, or she be married before he should gain those distinctions without which he dreaded to approach her.

Then, when fame and the promise of fortune was his for a while, and he laid them at her feet, the discovery of his tremendous mistake!

Here he dropped his head upon his desk and groaned—the old agony had returned and bowed him down.

How long he remained bent beneath that impassioned storm that surged over and over his soul cannot be computed by minutes or hours, for the spirit knows neither time nor space.

A voice sweeter than the music of the spheres roused him.

"Wakefield—"

"Hark! Oh, for the love of heaven, let this be no illusion of sudden madness."

He dared not break the spell by moving—his very breath was suspended.

His whole soul listened.

"Wakefield, look at me! I am your wife if you will take me!"

She had come to him as she had ever come, in the moment of his greatest need.

She was standing by his side. She was speaking to him in the queenly purity of her soul.

"Vivia! Vivia!" he exclaimed, excitedly, and started up.

Then he opened his arms, and with one great heart sob of joy pressed her to his bosom for a moment, and then, relaxing his grasp, he sank down in his chair, ghastly pale, nearly swooning.

And had she come back to give him her heart?

Were they to be happy?

Yes! They had suffered much. They had been parted long. They had met again.

Once each had been all alone in the world, and now they were united and happy.

Once they were struggling and striving in the dark—hoping against hope; and now—now they were happy.

Austin and Theodora—Genevieve and Wakefield.

But there are others of the characters in this story who require our attention, and strange and terrible adventures are yet doomed to befall them.

CHAPTER XLVIII

ENSNARED.

Thou hast prevaricated with my trust,
By underhanded means undone me;
And while my open nature trusted in thee,
Thou hast stepped in between me and my hopes,
And ravished from me all my soul held dear.

Rome.

WHEN the cabin was at last still, Gladys, with her hands and feet tied, tried to compose herself to sleep; but for a long time tried in vain.

"I would like to know," she said to herself, "what star presided at my natal hour, that makes it my fate always to be restrained, imprisoned, or fettered? My guardian locked me up in my own room to hinder me from entering into a marriage that my parents had approved. Dear Miss Polly locked me up to prevent my being intruded upon. And now, these good ladies tie me hand and foot lest I should go mad in the night and cut their throats or set fire to the steamer!"

Something ludicrous amid the seriousness of the whole affair struck the mirthful chord of Gladys' heart; and despite her fetters, she laughed aloud.

"Hear her!" muttered Mrs. Brown, in an awful whisper; "that was a real madhouse laugh! If we had not tied her down, we should all have been burned in our beds!"

And all the other ladies silently acquiesced, and shuddered.

Gladys did not find it easy sleeping with fettered limbs. Her rest was broken throughout the night, and she was glad when morning came.

When the ladies had risen and dressed themselves, they voluntarily released Gladys, informing her that she might get up and put on her clothes, as they would soon be at their destination.

Gladys eagerly availed herself of the privilege. At first, her limbs were rather cramped; but still she managed to make her toilet, and to join her fellow-travellers at the breakfast-table in the saloon.

There she was very much annoyed by the curious regards of the gentlemen passengers, who saw in her the reputed lunatic who had fallen into fits in the ladies' cabin on the previous night. But Gladys bore all this very good-humouredly, supported as she was by the thought that she would soon be with her husband, and that all her troubles would then be over.

After breakfast she went up on deck, to watch the vessel's progress up the river. Here also her appearance, as a suspected lunatic, attracted much attention, and occasioned many remarks. But her eyes and thoughts were so much engaged and interested that she remained utterly unconscious of the annoyance.

Presently the steamer ran in alongside of her own wharf—the engine began to blow off steam, and the passengers crowded forward to land.

Gladys was not quite heartlessly forgotten.

"Poor creature," said Mrs. Brown, "I hope her friends will meet her punctually. Indeed, if I had time, I really would look after her myself."

"Oh, the stewardess will do that! She is paid to do it," said Miss White.

When all the ladies had landed, Gladys remained standing on the deck, in a state of perplexity, until the stewardess, observing her, came up to her side.

"So, miss, your friend has not come on board to meet you and take you away," said the woman respectfully.

"I am not 'miss'; I am madam; and it is my husband that I have come to meet. He has no reason to expect me so soon; and I am an inexperienced traveller, and I feel rather uncertain how to proceed," said Gladys.

"Then, miss—I beg your pardon, I meant to say ma'am, only you look so childish to be married—hadn't you better do as the other lady recommended, in case no one came to meet you?"

"What was that? I don't remember."

"Why, let me call a cab to take you to some nice, quiet hotel, where you could stop till you sent for your husband."

"Oh, yes; thank you—I had better go to a hotel first," said Gladys, eagerly.

The stewardess went to the side of the steamer and beckoned a cab that was standing on the wharf. And while it was drawing up, she had Gladys' luggage brought forward.

"What hotel would you recommend, stewardess?" inquired Gladys.

"The Royal."

"Thank you! Good-bye, stewardess! Drive to the Royal, coachman."

The cab drove off, and in a few minutes drew up before the hotel in question.

Gladys alighted, paid and discharged the cab, and walked into the house. Here, again, her extreme youth, her deadly paleness, her deep mourning, and

her excited manner attracted attention and occasioned remark. But landlords and waiters have quicker eyes for money than ears for gossip; and so, though they wondered to see so young and helpless a creature travelling alone, yet as they perceived she had a large travelling trunk and a well-filled purse, they furnished her with the room she required and answered the questions she put.

"Can you tell me how I can best reach the guard-ship at Sheerness?" she asked of the dignitary who ushered her into her room.

"I really cannot, Miss; but I can ask the clerk of the house."

"Do, if you please," said Gladys, feeling all a young wife's annoyance at being "missed" by a waiter.

Presently, in answer to her question, the clerk of the house appeared in person.

"You were inquiring for a ship, miss?" he asked, politely.

"Yes, sir; I am Mrs. Powis," said Gladys, lifting her graceful little head with an assumption of matronly dignity; "and I have come to join my husband, who has recently been appointed to the guard-ship. And I wish to know how I can best reach that ship."

"I think, madam," said the clerk, in a slow and hesitating manner, "that there is some mistake. There is no such ship at Sheerness."

"Oh, yes, there is, sir, indeed! The ship commanded by my husband is certainly there," said the young wife, in a tone of annoyance; for she felt fretted and uneasy at what she mentally called the stupidity of the clerk.

"I am very sure, madam, that there is some mistake. The only guard-ship there is commanded by Lieutenant Brown, whose lady is now in this house."

Gladys, so pale before, now turned ghastly white, as a suspicion of the truth that she had been deceived and entrapped burst upon her dismayed mind.

But summoning an almost superhuman energy to her aid, she inquired:

"How can I best and soonest reach the ship?"

"By the train to Sheerness, of course, madam."

"Then please to order a cab to take me to the railway station immediately. I must go at once."

The clerk left the room to comply with this request, and Gladys sank nearly swooning into her chair to await the cab, which was soon announced.

"Drive quickly, and I will double your fare," she said to the cabman, as soon as she was seated.

The cabman obeyed with a will, and soon set her down at her destination. She hastily thrust five shillings into his hand, ran into the station, secured her ticket, and took her seat in the train that was just leaving.

"Good gracious me alive! if here isn't that poor crazed girl again!" said a voice at her elbow.

Gladys turned suddenly, and recognized her fellow-passenger, Mrs. Brown; and remembering what the clerk of the hotel had told her, she clasped her hands and raised her eyes, exclaiming:

"Oh, madam, does Lieutenant Brown command the only guard-ship at Sheerness?"

"Of course he does," said the astonished lady.

"And you have come to join him?"

"Yes! Is that any business of yours, my girl?" demanded the lady, with a jealous snap of her little black eyes, as she recalled various instances of the brave lieutenant's gallantry.

"Oh, madam, have pity on me, answer my questions kindly. I am a poor inexperienced country girl, motherless, fatherless, friendless—"

"And deserve to be so, I have no doubt," said the lady.

Gladys winced at the cruel retort, but continued her pleadings.

"I have been very unhappy, and am so still. My husband went away; and I had a bad illness, in which I nearly lost my life—and I fear that I have been betrayed—"

"Umph—umph! the old story! did the child live?" demanded the lady, with suppressed fierceness.

"The child, madam; what child?" inquired Gladys, in innocent amazement.

"Why, your child! his child! The child! Oh! won't I give it to him when I see him!" exclaimed the lieutenant's wife, in a furious whisper.

It was now Gladys' turn to think her companion mad.

"I am not speaking of any child, madam! I am speaking of my missing husband, and of my own miseries. I came here to find him. I was assured that he was in command of the guard-ship here. Can you tell me if he is?"

"Oh, of course, it is very likely I would tell you! Ah! wait till I get on board, that is all! I will give Arthur Brown my opinion of his conduct, for once in my life! And then I will go back to my father! I will go back to my father and apply for a divorce! I will! I will! if I die for it," exclaimed the incensed

woman, in a hoarse whisper through her grinding teeth.

"You must be so much more experienced in naval affairs than I am. Can you aid me in finding my husband?" pleaded Gladdys, who had not caught the violent words of the lieutenant's wife.

"How dare you apply to me, you wretch! Look here, you abandoned creature! If you dare so much as show your face on board, I will have you taken up, and sent to the workhouse as a common vagrant!" exclaimed the enraged woman, as she twitched her dress from the contact of Gladdys' black gown, and turned her back upon her.

Gladdys shrunk back appalled, and gazed in consternation upon the fury she had unwittingly aroused. She did not understand one word of the tirade that had been poured out upon her own most innocent head.

At Sheerness, an old man, of whom she sought information, gave her careful directions, and then murmured, half-aloud:

"Poor thing! what ails her?"

"She's crazy," said one of Gladdys' fellow-travellers, who happened to be present.

And all who heard the question and answer looked curiously after the reputed lunatic.

Indeed the whole look, manner, and appearance of the wretched girl, with clasped hands, and wild eyes, and pleading voice, begging of everyone with whom she met information about Commander Powis, favoured the supposition of her insanity.

Some laughed at her, some insulted her, and all assured her that there was no such ship and no such captain there as she sought.

Nearly maddened by despair, a group of idle boys collected about "the crazy girl," with hoots, and cries, and jeers.

Frenzied with affright, Gladdys turned to fly, and ran—into the arms of Mrs. Jay Llewellyn!

"Let me go—let me go! You have deceived and entrapped me!" she screamed, as that lady's arms closed like the folds of a serpent around her.

"No, I will not let you go. I am your guardian. You are my ward. And I take possession of you in the name of the law!" hissed the woman into the tortured ear of her victim.

"I am the lawful wife of Arthur Powis, and your rights of guardianship have been superseded," said Gladdys, struggling wildly to release herself.

"You are no one's wife!" exclaimed Mrs. Jay, raising her voice, so that the crowd who were beginning to collect might hear her words. "You are no one's wife! You are a lost, ruined, and abandoned girl! But you are still a minor and my ward, and you must come home with me."

"I will not—I will not! You have deceived me with a lie! You have betrayed me with a kiss! You have separated me from my husband! Yes, Mrs. Jay, you have! I know you have. I know you would do me some fatal harm from the very moment that I recognized you as you passed me in the carriage the last day that I ever spent with my dear Arthur. Oh! that I had only trusted that instinct rather than trusted you! And now you have parted us. Perhaps you have made away with him—perhaps you have murdered him! I believe you capable of doing so! But I will seek him all over the world! And if he is living, I will find him! And if he is dead, I will avenge him! You have kindled all the Llewellyn blood in my veins now! And once on fire, it is not easily quenched!" cried Gladdys, striving desperately to free himself.

"You see, good people, how very mad this poor girl is. Ah! it is easy to read her story, poor thing! the victim of a villain's perfidy!" said Mrs. Llewellyn, sweetly, to the gaping crowd, who sagely nodded their heads.

"Good people, will one of you assist me to place this unfortunate girl in the carriage?" said Mrs. Llewellyn, appealing to the crowd.

Several men immediately stepped forward to offer their services.

"You, sir, you look like a family man! Pray lend me your aid; that will be quite sufficient," said Mrs. Jay, selecting from the number that offered a respectable gray-haired man, who immediately laid his hands upon the struggling girl.

But little assistance was needed to subdue her now.

Her superhuman struggles had exhausted all her strength; her intensely strained muscles suddenly relaxed, and she fainted in the arms of her deadly enemy.

"That will do, sir. Put her into the carriage, sir," said Mrs. Llewellyn.

And the old man, an unconscious accomplice of crime, lifted Gladdys tenderly, and placed her in the carriage.

"I thank you very much, sir," said Mrs. Llewellyn, as she also entered the carriage, and took her seat at her victim's side.

CHAPTER XLIX.

IN THE CULTURE'S TALONS.

What! are my doors opposed against my passage?
Have I been ever free, and meet my house
Be my retentive enemy, my goal?
The place which I have feasted, does it now
Like all mankind, show me an iron heart?

Shakespeare.

THE man remounted to his place, and the carriage drove off to town.

When it drew up before the hotel in which Mrs. Jay Llewellyn had taken up her quarters, the lady beckoned the coachman to the window, and said:

"Go into the house, and call the landlord to my assistance."

The man went, and brought the clerk, who approached, hat in hand, and bowing before the arrogant woman.

"You see the condition of this unhappy young lady? She is quite insensible, and perfectly helpless. I require some assistance in removing her to the house," said Mrs. Llewellyn, pointing to the lifeless-looking burden on her lap.

"Certainly, madam. I can carry the young lady in, if you will permit me to do so."

"Thank you, yes."

"And—shall I send a messenger to fetch a physician?"

"No—no physician could do her any good. Her case, though not at all dangerous, is quite hopeless. It is the mind, you understand, rather than the body, that is afflicted."

"Ah, yes, poor young lady! Something not right here?" said the clerk, pointing to his forehead.

"Exactly; and, unfortunately, we allowed her too much liberty. And, with the cunning that frequently attends insanity, she managed to elude our vigilance and make her escape, and travel on here in pursuit of some ignis-fatuus raised from the miasma of her own diseased brain."

"Ah, yes, madam; we know! A sad case!"

"Extremely sad. Now, sir, if you please, pass your arm under her shoulder as I raise her head. It is excessively awkward, removing a fainting woman from a small carriage," said the lady, as she aided the clerk in his difficult task.

At length, between them, they got the insensible girl out of the carriage; and the clerk, whose name was Penn, bore her with tender and respectful care into the house.

"Take her at once to the rooms I have engaged," said Mrs. Llewellyn, who had followed him closely.

The clerk obeyed. And when he had carried her up two or three flights of stairs, and laid her on the bed of a spacious upper chamber, he withdrew.

When Mrs. Llewellyn found herself alone with her victim, she approached the bed, and looked upon the face of Gladdys—the face so pale and thin, so worn and haggard with sorrow and sickness, that it would have melted any heart less hard than that of the woman who contemplated it.

"So, you poor, weak, miserable girl, you thought, with your lover's aid, to baffle me, did you? Well, you are here, in my absolute power again. And he is not likely to give us any more trouble. Only live, my girl! Only live long enough to become the wife of James Stukely and the mother of his child, and then—die as soon as you please. I wonder will the strong Llewellyn mind bend to this? I wonder will the proud Llewellyn heart bear or break? We shall see!" said this fell woman, as with the stern, ruthless, and malignant aspect of a fiend she seemed to swoop over her prey.

She made no effort to bring Gladdys out of her swoon.

She knew that in such cases the victim is better left to nature, and that in this particular case the longer Gladdys continued in helpless unconsciousness the better it would suit her own evil purposes.

She left the bedside, and went and opened a small medicine chest, and began to prepare certain powerful drugs—not stimulating and strengthening medicines to rouse the failing mind and body of the patient, and not exactly deadly poisons to utterly destroy life, but what was really as fatal as the last-mentioned agents—baleful, sedative tonics, that excite hunger and appetite, and promote digestion and nutrition, while they lower the action of the brain and heart, and nearly paralyze the intellect and will, and thus save the body while they destroy the mind.

Divine medicaments these are when used with judgment and conscience; devilish poisons when used with rashness or malignity; known to certain good doctors of the middle ages, and used to nullify the poignant anguish of grief that, but for them, might have been fatal to life; known, also, to certain wicked alchemists, and used by them to destroy the moral free agency where it was desirable to enslave rather than to kill; known, lastly to Mrs. Jay Llewellyn, who had made the science of toxicology the favourite

study of her life, and now about to be used by her to restore the bodily health and to paralyze the mental and moral energy of her unconscious victim.

While she was still busy at her demoniacal work, a moan and a stir on the bed warned her that Gladdys was recovering her consciousness.

She quickly arose, and prepared a mixture, and took it to the bedside, and lifted the head of the poor girl, and placed the draught to her dry lips.

And Gladdys, scarcely half-conscious of her act, instinctively swallowed the liquid and became quiescent.

There came a rap at the door.

Mrs. Llewellyn quickly dropped the head of Gladdys, drew the curtains before the bed, and went to see who was there.

A stranger to her.

Mrs. Lieutenant Brown!

"I beg your pardon, madam, but you must have mistaken the room," said Mrs. Jay, drawing herself up with her most repellent aspect.

"Oh, no, not if you are the guardian of that young woman who came down with me in the train this morning," said Mrs. Brown, deliberately walking into the room.

"But we have not the honour of your acquaintance, madam!" said Mrs. Jay, haughtily.

"She has," replied the visitor, nodding her head emphatically. "I am the wife of that man she followed here."

And her little black eyes snapped vindictively.

Mrs. Llewellyn was not a woman to start at anything—no, not even a shell that might happen to burst in her presence; but she certainly did draw back and gaze steadfastly at the speaker before her.

"How did you know that the young lady followed any one here?" she inquired.

"I am sure she made no secret of it. She did nothing but babble of her sweetheart—her husband she called him, the deceitful wretch!—all the time she was on the boat. But how she could have pretended to think he was her husband when he had a lawful wife living, I don't know!"

"But you do not mean to say that the lieutenant had been married before?" inquired Mrs. Jay, speaking, of course, of Arthur Powis.

"Don't I, though? Yes, I do? He had been married to me four years, the monster!" cried Mrs. Brown—speaking, of course, only of her own husband, Arthur Brown.

"My dear madam, this is very shocking news to me!" exclaimed Mrs. Llewellyn, with every appearance of grief in her face, but with secret delight in her heart.

"Shocking! If you knew what I have suffered from that man's behaviour, your heart would bleed for me," exclaimed the self-tormentor, bursting into tears.

"My dear madam, pray sit down and tell me all about it," said Mrs. Jay, who really thought that now she had discovered a secret in the life of Arthur Powis that would make his very memory abhorrent to Gladdys.

Sobbing hysterically, Mrs. Brown threw herself into a chair, and poured forth the history of her fancied wrongs; and as she always mentioned her unlucky husband as "Arthur" or "the lieutenant," and as this name and title applied equally to the lost Arthur Powis and the slandered Arthur Brown, neither Mrs. Llewellyn nor her excited visitor had any means of discovering their mutual mistake.

"And now, ma'am," said Mrs. Brown, wiping her eyes, as she ended her story, "I have taken the liberty of calling on you, and begging you to take the young woman away as soon as possible, for her sake as well as for mine and for Arthur's. Upon second thoughts, I don't blame her so much, poor thing, for Arthur is very handsome and captivating, and that's the sacred truth, or he wouldn't ever have got me as he did; and no doubt he made her believe that he married her. I blame him; but though I do blame him so much, and feel so angry and outrageous sometimes that I feel as if I must either divorce him or kill him outright, yet you see I like him too well to part with him altogether, especially as he has so lately come off a long voyage. So I must beg and entreat you, ma'am, to take the young lady away with you. I know she is quite crazed, and that he was the cause of it all; but then she might come to her senses, and they might meet, and then! And so, you see, it is better for all concerned that she should be taken away at once."

"I have already decided on doing so," said Mrs. Llewellyn.

"Oh! I am very glad. And, ma'am, I hope you will not feel offended at anything that I have said."

"Oh, no! The unhappy young woman is no relative of mine; she is only a poor orphan that I have taken charge of from motives of charity, and that I am unwilling to desert even now in her fall," said Mrs. Llewellyn, graciously.

"Oh, madam! how very kind of you. Providence

will surely reward such benevolence as yours," said the lieutenant's wife.

At this moment there came another rap at the door. And Mrs. Llewellyn, knowing that this must be the clerk, arose and opened it.

As Mr. Penn entered, with a purse in one hand, and some papers in the other, Mrs. Brown arose and took leave.

"Do you know that lady?" inquired Mrs. Llewellyn, when her visitor had left the room.

"Yes, madam; she is Mrs. Arthur Brown, and she stops here frequently," replied the clerk.

"Mrs. Arthur—whom?" quickly demanded Mrs. Llewellyn.

"Mrs. Arthur Brown, madam, the wife of Lieutenant Arthur Brown, who commands the guard-ship now in the river," replied the clerk, as he quietly laid down the change and papers upon the table before the lady.

"Are you sure of what you say?"

"Oh, yes, madam. The lieutenant is in the house now. Have you any further commands?"

"Oh, no! except that you will have a carriage at the door, at four o'clock precisely, to take us to the station."

"Certainly, madam," said Mr. Penn, bowing himself out.

Mrs. Llewellyn sat down and laughed—a noiseless, cardiac laugh.

The mystery was out.

"Trifles light as air are to the jealous confirmation strong as proofs from holy writ."

And from a few coincidences, the jealous wife of Lieutenant Brown had mistaken the "Arthur" sought by poor Gladdys for her own Arthur, and through that mistake would doubtless lead the unlucky lieutenant a terrible life for some time to come.

And Arthur Powis had been no bigamist; but, notwithstanding that, Mrs. Llewellyn thought she could turn this mistake to such good account as to persuade Gladdys that he had been one, and that she had been led into a fictitious marriage by an already married man; for there had been such seeming truth in all poor, jealous, deluded Mrs. Brown had said, that it would be only necessary to repeat it word for word to make Gladdys believe it.

The few remaining hours of Mrs. Llewellyn's stay passed quietly. She took luncheon in her own room. She plied Gladdys with beef-tea and port-wine, nourishing and strengthening liquids, that the stupefied girl could swallow without difficulty.

And at four o'clock precisely she had Gladdys lifted from the bed, and taken down and placed in the carriage. She also got in, and took the girl's drooping head upon her false bosom. And in this way they drove to the station—the coachman helping to carry Gladdys to the train, and assisting to place her in a first-class carriage.

There was not a soul in the carriage save Mrs. Jay Llewellyn and herself.

The light from the lamp fell upon the pale face of Gladdys, as she lay quiescent, with half-closed eyes, upon her seat. She looked up, and seeing Mrs. Llewellyn, said:

"You have deceived and betrayed me, Mrs. Jay. You have entrapped me into your power. But be assured that I know you cannot retain me in your custody; and that there will speedily come a day of deliverance for me, and of retribution for you. And the certain knowledge of this enables me to bear this indignity as calmly as I do."

Gladdys spoke firmly, but without the least excitement; for although the stupefying effects of the drug that was administered to her had passed away, yet the subduing effects of it remained, and rendered excitement as yet impossible.

"I am the best friend that you have in the world, my dear, as you will very soon find. Here, drink this cordial."

"If I take it from your hand at all, I do it under protest. And if I drink it at all, it is because I think it would be wrong wantonly to injure my own health by abstinence, and I feel myself under the necessity of taking something to keep up my strength, for I must keep up that in order to withstand you, Mrs. Jay," said Gladdys, as she took the cup and eagerly drank the cordial—for the drug had made her thirsty as well as stupid.

"Put your compliance on any ground you like, my love, so that you do yourself good," said Mrs. Llewellyn, smiling grimly.

Gladdys drank all the cordial, fixed her eyes defiantly on Mrs. Llewellyn as she returned the empty cup to that lady, and then suddenly dropped back against the cushion and fell asleep.

"It works admirably. It could not work better!" said Mrs. Llewellyn, joyfully.

When, at length, the long journey was ended, and the train stopped at Heathville, a small seaside town, Gladdys, in a state of stupor, was lifted from the railway train, borne in the arms of a stout porter, and

placed in a large travelling carriage that was waiting there for the travellers.

Mrs. Llewellyn, left standing by the carriage, beckoned her coachman to come down.

The deaf mute Jude obeyed, and stood before his mistress.

It was a very lonely scene, and picturesque in its loneliness. The village was asleep; its lights were darkened; its houses closed; its streets deserted. There had been no passengers to alight, with the exception of Mrs. Llewellyn and her charge, and their luggage. And if any wakeful inhabitant had heard the stopping of the passing train, he had probably turned over and gone to sleep again. The village was so still that the only sound heard was that of the gentle surge of the waves upon the shore; and so dark that the only lights visible were the lamps of the travelling carriage; and so solitary that the only life visible was that gathered around it.

Mrs. Llewellyn rapidly spelled upon her fingers the question:

"Are the horses quite fresh?"

The mute nodded.

"Are the roads good?"

A nod.

"It is now twelve o'clock. We must make thirty miles before six to-morrow morning; then change horses and breakfast at Pebletown; and then get to Cader Idris by six in the evening. This can be done?"

Another nod.

"Mount your box then, and drive as fast as is expedient; but don't exhaust the horses at the onset," said Mrs. Llewellyn (with her fingers), as she got into the carriage.

The deaf mute put up the steps, closed the door, mounted the box, and drove off.

I need not describe the journey at length.

At sunrise the next morning they stopped at a mountain hamlet and hotel, and changed horses. Mrs. Llewellyn did not leave the carriage, but had breakfast brought to her there; and she ate heartily, and fed her victim on nutritious liquids and drugged her with sedatives. And then, with fresh horses, they resumed their journey.

At noon they stopped at a village at the foot of the mountain, changed horses again, took luncheon in the carriage, and with renewed strength went on their way.

At night they reached Cader Idris; and poor Gladdys, more dead than alive, was lifted from the carriage, and conveyed to her own room, and laid upon her bed, where Mrs. Llewellyn sat contemplating her in triumph.

(To be continued.)

ADMIRAL BENBOW.—The following lines were cut with a diamond on a square of glass, by Admiral Benbow, in a window of one of the bedrooms belonging to the house in which the gallant admiral was born, at Cotton Hill, Shrewsbury:

"Then only breathe one prayer for me,
That far away, where'er I go,
The heart that would have bled for thee
May feel through life no other woe.
I shall look back when on the main,
Back to my native isle,
And almost think I hear again
That voice, and view that smile."

Underneath have been added these lines:

"Then go, and round that head, like banners in the air,
Shall float full many a loving hope, and many a tender prayer."

WONDERFUL STONES.—Many of my readers have doubtless heard of the stones found occasionally in the heads of serpents, fish, and other animals, which are said to possess the property of curing different diseases, allaying the pain of stings, &c. A relative of Mr. Z— showed me a dark green one, which had been brilliantly polished, and resembled a malachite. It was found, she told me, in the head of a serpent, and had already been the means of effecting many cures. On one occasion, a native of the town, whilst working in the country, having been bitten on the foot by a venomous snake, was taken to the hospital, where he suffered agonies for two or three days; at the expiration of which time his foot was swollen to an enormous size, every effort of the medical men in attendance having proved ineffectual to allay the inflammation. The poor man, in great torment, at length bethought himself of the stone in Mrs. V—'s possession, the fame of which had spread through Djokdja, and earnestly implored that they would try this remedy. The doctors smiled incredulously; but readily assented, to gratify the man's whim, as they called it, and despatched a messenger with a polite request for the loan of the stone, which was at once granted. On application to the wound, and before many seconds had elapsed, it adhered so tightly to the

flesh that it was found impossible to remove it; and not until the swelling had completely abated, and the foot had resumed its natural size, did the wonderful stone detach itself and fall, leaving the patient free from pain. This stone, being porous, possessed the property of absorbing diseased or venomous matter. When it was placed in a basin of water, the liquid soon became quite discoloured, and it was not till fresh water had been put into the vessel several times that the stone became perfectly cleansed from the bad matter it had absorbed from the wound.—"Life in Java." By W. B. d'Almeida.

EXCELLENT SPORT AT DEER-STALKING.

In the deer-forests, excellent sport is being enjoyed. We scarcely remember a year in which so many stags have been killed.

In the Duke of Richmond's Blackwater forest, on the 7th, Captain Campbell brought down four fine stags, weighing from 12 to 13 stones; on the 12th, in the same forest, he had two stags, one of them a Royal stag. He was out also on the 13th, and had one stag of ten points.

The Rev. Mr. Mickelthwait, in Glenfiddoch, killed on the 12th a fine stag; and on the 14th, Lord A. Gordon Lennox brought down in Glenfiddoch a stag of 14½ stones, and nine points.

In his forest of Laggan, Lord Henry Bentinck killed on the 7th a fine stag, which weighed 14 stones; on the 8th, two stags fell to his ride, one of them 13 stones 5 lb., and the other 12 stones. On the 10th, he had two, one 13 stones 4 lb., another 12 stones 10 lb. On Monday, the 12th, he brought down no fewer than five stags, one of them with a beautiful head of thirteen points; one of the others weighed 14 stones; one 13 stones 6 lb.; and the remaining two 13 stones each.

On Saturday morning the Earl of Seafield and party had a "drive" in the forest of Balmeacan, and shot four stags and three roe-deer. On the 12th, his lordship shot a fine animal of 18 stones 9 lbs.

Horatio Ross, writing from Glendibdale, on Tuesday, says: "I mentioned in my last that up to Saturday evening we had killed forty-one stags. My sons, Horatio and Hercules, were out yesterday, and killed four stags, averaging about 14 stones weight each. This makes forty-five stags since 30th of July. We have got a vast number of very fine heads this season. We never had such a good average of either weight of deer or quality of heads, though we have not been fortunate in killing any decided monsters."

In Altanour Forest, on Wednesday, the Hon. George Skene Duff shot a splendid stag of 16 stones, with a fine head of ten points. On the following day in the same forest, he brought down no fewer than four fine stags, which weighed respectively 17 stones 6 lbs., 16 stones 7 lbs., 15 stones 8 lbs., and 14 stones 4 lbs. The stags' heads were all very good. On Saturday last, the Hon. George S. Duff was out deer-stalking, bringing down another stag.

The Earl of Fife had excellent sport last week in Mar Lodge Forest.

Captain Vivian, who is at present enjoying the hospitality of the Earl and Countess of Fife at Mar Lodge, was out deer-stalking on Saturday, killing one stag, that weighed clean upwards of 16 stones.

Our attempts to put down the slave trade on the coast of Africa would be ludicrous were not the subject so melancholy. We have at the present time seven ships of war cruising off the coast, and yet they are unable to overtake notorious slavers. One of these has made three voyages recently, each time with "a full cargo" of slaves. The Spanish and Brazilian governments are the offenders. And as they send out swift ships for this nefarious traffic, they are able to laugh to scorn the feeble exertions of the greatest naval power in the world.

THE BISHOP OF LONDON SPENDING A NIGHT ON THE ROCKS.—The Bishop of London and family have lately been residing on the banks of Loch Fyne. They recently made an expedition to the island of Arnan in a small steamer, where they spent the day. When returning in the evening, the sky became overcast, the weather stormy, and the night dark. When near the entrance to Loch Fyne, they were suddenly startled by the cry, "Breaker's ahead!" and before the steam-boat's course could be altered, they were aground upon the rocks. The captain informed them that the boat, being iron, it would be dangerous to back her off, for fear she might have received such injuries as to make it impossible to keep her afloat. They were, therefore, obliged to land in the small boat. When the party reached the shore, a new difficulty presented itself. They discovered that they had landed, not upon the mainland, but upon a rock which might possibly be covered by the flowing tide. They soon, however, found that they were at least safe from that danger.

They were able to construct a tent by means of some tarpaulin; and under the shelter which it afforded, they spent the night. When day dawned, they were soon relieved from their disagreeable position, and we are glad to hear that none of the party have suffered from exposure during a night of somewhat stormy weather.

A VOTE LOST FOR THREEPENCE.—At the Brighton Borough Registration Court a man claimed a vote, but was objected to, as a "defaulter of poor's rates." The receipts showed he had paid threepence short of last rate, and it was suggested that the incident was a mistake in giving change, or something of that kind. The collector, however, said that the claimant had previously paid rates short to about the same amount, and had neglected to bring the balance. The barrister said he must then take the consequences of his neglect, and disallowed the claim, which had been supported by the Conservatives.

RUFUS ANSON'S TEST.

CHAPTER I.

RUFUS ANSON had been eccentric from his childhood. He was a tall, slender man, with clear grey eyes, and thick, curling grey hair. At twenty he promised to be handsome. A slight fault of stooping, pallor of the face, and an absent expression of the eyes, marred the original regularity and harmony of his physique; but one felt, in looking at him, that if his studious habits could be discontinued, and healthier customs preferred, that his face and figure would gain the bloom and erectness only necessary to render him a strikingly handsome man.

But the studious habits were not discontinued, but were intensified until, as time passed, the stoop of the shoulders became almost a deformity; and, as the chest narrowed the face paled. Finally, Rufus Anson was a cynical dyspeptic. He hated the world, and he made the world hate him. He lived alone with a housekeeper as cross-grained as himself. The house, retired and shady, was made gloomy by the humours of its occupants, and its master's study was, naturally, the pinnacle of gloominess.

The grand old chambers, which had been his mother's pride, were shut up, and the dampness of unused stained walls and the rich brocade of their hangings. The halls echoed lonesomely, and so quiet were all the apartments of the main building that one might easily imagine it to be haunted when the white moonlight drifted through the windows upon the floors, while the vines without shivered in the breeze; or when the wind whistled in the cold, wide chimneys upon winter nights.

Rufus Anson occupied only the right wing of the house, which was very large, and his study was upon the upper landing; there he had his books, his globes, his telescopes, and his chemical apparatus. Adjoining was his chamber. Below was a dining and sitting-room, and on the ground floor was the room for cooking, and two small rooms devoted to the use of Mrs. Grubb, the housekeeper, who demanded, upon taking up her abode there, that she should have her own table, and maintain her own habits.

So the two lived alone for several years. Mrs. Grubb had a few acquaintances, but Anson rarely saw any one but her in his household. Every evening he took a walk through the town, and there he was rarely recognized, though universally known. Men passed him coldly, women indifferently, little children fearfully. To the latter he was often harsh. He had no tolerance with the little girls' frivolous plays with dolls, or the boys' noisy whooping at cricket. No one loved him, and he loved no one. He was said to believe in utter corruption and selfishness, and laid total depravity at the doors of nearly all he came in contact with. Often he had been heard to say that this world's goodness was a sham, that courtesy was but a trap for the unwary, and that entire selfishness abounded and ruled the world. He looked as though he were capable of saying and believing all this. His face was thin and sallow and wan. There seemed no warm blood or vigorous strength in his whole body, as he walked in an atmosphere of repellant acrimony past all the homes of the town, as the dusk enveloped them.

One evening, while going his accustomed rounds, he was delayed by a crowd at the corner of a street. There he met a man whom he knew—a tall, active, philanthropic fellow, the antipodes of himself.

"How are you, Anson?" exclaimed Frank Broome, taking the cold slender hand in his warm strong clasp.

"Wretchedly ill," answered Anson. "Now tell me that it's a mercy, and that heaven is good to allow me to live at all," he added bitterly.

Broome knew that a controversy on their different views of life would only end in dissatisfaction to both; so he changed the subject.

"Come and make a call with me," he said.

"No, no," answered Anson, testily. "I'm not a visiting man at all, you know. I detest making calls."

"But this isn't a fashionable place—only the home of a little girl who lost her mother last week, and I must find something to do with her. She's a sweet little thing. Come, I want you to see her." And before Anson could withdraw himself, he was standing before a half-open door, from beyond which he could hear a voice softly singing. The two men listened an instant. It was a simple, pleasant hymn.

Broome knocked, and pushed the door open. Within was a wide, low room, with a lighted roof; under this was an easel and some faded red drapery, and a canvas stretched for painting, turned against the wall. The room was poorly furnished, but ornamented profusely with paintings, most of them very good. By the window sat a child, who had been sewing and singing to herself. She rose up quickly at their entrance, displaying a lovely face, with dark eyes, and soft, dark red hair clustering over her shoulders. She had the exquisite complexion, resembling rose-tinted ivory, which often goes with hair like hers; and as Anson glanced from her to various heads upon the wall, he saw her face repeated with added maturity, and various diversities, as Madonnas.

"Good evening, Doris," said Broome, meeting and taking her hand. She might have been twelve years old, but she was slimmer than most children at twelve, and looked older. There was something grave and responsible in her way of assigning them seats.

"My father has not come," she said, in a low voice, looking at Broome, wistfully, as he sat down. He looked away from her sad little face.

"Hasn't?" said he. "Well, we must be doing something while we are waiting. Suppose you take Rafe, and go visiting a gentleman who is a friend of mine. He has a very nice house, and is all alone. I think he would like a little girl very much. You could sing to him and be useful and happy. Rafe would go; wouldn't you, Rafe?"

Rafe was a great, gaunt greyhound, who came slowly out of a corner and laid his head on Broome's knee as his name was pronounced. Broome patted him, and sent him to Anson. But the dog went only a step towards the stranger; then returned to Broome and laid down at his feet. Meanwhile the little girl seemed absorbed in thought.

"I'm afraid my father will come while I am gone," she said to Broome.

"Oh, well, you can leave word with the women up-stairs. They will tell him where you are when he comes."

The child sighed like some one accustomed to sighing.

"Where is the gentleman's house?" she asked.

"At the other end of the town," answered Broome. "The matter isn't settled yet," he added; "but I thought I'd speak of it to you, and be sure that the arrangement would be pleasant to you. It's very lovely for you to stay here alone. I don't like to leave you here."

"Oh, no! It's not lonely," said the child; "mamma's picture is there," pointing to a very beautiful portrait over a little couch in the corner; "it's just the same, almost, as if she sat by me; and father's things are all about here, waiting for him to come back. It's not at all lonely. Only I should be lonely anywhere else," she observed, gravely.

"Well, I must go now," said Broome; "but here's a book for you to read, and I'll come and see you in the morning. Rafe, you are to take good care of Doris, and in the morning I'll bring you something nice." The dog's eyes glistened as he crouched before Broome, apparently comprehending his words.

"Now good-night, Doris."

"Good-bye," said the child, with tender confidence; "perhaps by morning my father will have come."

The two men went out.

"Who is her father?" asked Anson, unconsciously betrayed into human interest.

"He's a dissipated fellow, and an artist of much promise. He had been in the habit of going off on sketching excursions for weeks at a time, during which he would drink and dissipate excessively, leaving his wife and child to live as best they might. But a year ago he deserted them entirely, going off with a party of pedestrian excursionists to the lakes. He has not been heard from since. The wife, always delicate, and very beautiful, has lately died; but for a year she had waited every day for her husband's return, and she has bequeathed this faith to the child. The poor woman supported them with her embroidery. As you see, the easel has been left just as it was when Sheppard went away, and the child waits for him just as her mother did. It isn't likely he'll ever come back; and if he does, he won't be of any use to her. Now I propose that you take the child and take care of her."

"I!" cried Anson, astonished.

"Yes, you."

"What can I do with the child? Besides, I've told her that you wanted to send her off on a visit."

"To you; I meant you. You are the only man I know capable of taking care of her. You have a nice home and abundant means, and the wishes of no one to cross your own. She's entirely desolate, and lovely and good as any child I wish to see. She'll be a comfort to you, Anson; take my word for it. You'll never regret it."

"Pshaw! the idea is utterly absurd."

"Nothing of the kind. It's perfectly sensible. More than that, I should think it would appeal to you as a duty. The child must be taken care of, and it's horrible to think of sending a child like that to the workhouse. You have a home and means. Adopt her, and bring a blessing upon yourself before you die."

"A blessing!" growled Anson. "Expected blessings never come. She'd probably disgrace me in five years by marrying a fiddler, or some of her father's drunken associates."

"Nonsense! don't look at the darkest possible side of the picture. She's an unusually intelligent and affectionate child, and will probably make a true and beautiful woman. Why, Anson, the devotion of those forsaken two, clinging to the memory of that scoundrel of a husband and father, has made the tears fill my eyes, and the conviction seize upon my soul that there is nothing so great, and true, and beautiful in the world as love, every time I have seen them. I should think the sight of that child would appeal to your heart, unless it is made of stone."

"Umph!" uttered Anson, stopping before the door of his own house. "Devotion is a habit, like anything else. I'll warrant that she could be made to hate her father in a month, as he deserves to be hated."

"I doubt it. To be sure she's very young, and consequently tractable, but her father was not a bad or vindictive man, only a weak one. He's probably as wretched as his worst enemy could wish now. He hadn't the strength to resist his depraved appetites, but the child remembers him, as a delicately handsome young man who taught and played with her. She remembers him with unconscious veneration for his talent, and thinks of him lovingly as her father. No, Anson; I don't think you could ever teach her to hate him."

Anson seemed galled to asperity by the tolerance and gentleness of the other.

"I'll prove it to you," he exclaimed. "I'll take the child, and prove it to you."

"You'd better have a higher motive," said Broome, shrugging his shoulders.

"No other motives would be satisfactory to me. You philanthropists are always ranting about love, and faith, and devotion. I'll show you what it's worth. It's taught to children; it's the defence of woman; but it's nothing better than any other means of gaining an end. Children soon learn the use of it, and hoodwink their parents; while wives manage their husbands, and husbands cheat their wives. The whole institution of affection is a swindle!"

He went into the house, still muttering to himself. Frank Broome went away smiling; then looked serious. Was Anson in earnest about taking the child? and if he was, should he allow her to go into the hands of a man who declared such wrong motives for adopting her? He thought the matter over for a long time. Finally he resolved that he would allow it, and even sanction it, if Anson proved to be sincere. He thought, being a man of clear insight into truth and human nature, that little Doris Sheppard was more likely to convert Rufus Anson, than that he was likely to pervert her.

CHAPTER II.

EARLY during the next forenoon, Rufus Anson, contrary to his custom, went out to walk. He had a purpose in going forth so early. He knocked at the entrance to little Doris' room.

There was no answer. He knocked again; then tried the door. It opened, and he stepped into the room. All was very quiet; but Rafe stood, an invincible sentinel, before the door, waiting silently to accost friend or foe.

Anson was a little startled, but he spoke to the dog; and at sound of his name, the creature lowered his lifted head, and seemed to recognize Anson as an acquaintance, though he did not receive him as a friend.

Turning quietly, he walked to a rug before the couch, and laid down there, as he had probably been lying before, only keeping his watchful eyes upon the visitor.

The child lay upon the couch, sleeping heavily. She was pale, and her lashes wet with tears; apparently she had fallen asleep, exhausted by weeping. The scene would have been pitiful and appealing to any one but Rufus Anson.

He regarded it coldly and curiously for a moment, then sat down and waited for the child to awake.

While he waited, he was absorbed in deep thought. The room was very still—so still that at last it seemed to startle him.

He looked up, and met the eyes of the beautiful mother of the child, enfolded above her. For a moment, they seemed gleaming with life, and full of accusation and reproach.

He fancied that the dewy, red lips were trembling; unconsciously he held his breath, as if waiting for them to speak.

But the next moment, he realized that he was gazing only upon canvas and paint.

"Pshaw!" he said, impatiently; and the child stirred and awoke.

Instantly she was upon her feet, looking at her visitor.

"Good morning, my dear. Has your father come?" asked Anson.

"No!" answered the child, sadly, unconscious of the sarcasm. "He has not come. I laid awake almost all night, listening for him; but he has not come."

"Umph! Well, you'd better not wait here any longer. Get your bonnet, take your dog, and come home with me."

"With you?" murmured the child, looking doubtful.

"Yes. I am the friend Mr. Broome told you of yesterday. Come."

"I did not know it was you," said the child, looking at him steadily.

"It was me," answered Anson, not quite comfortable under the scrutiny of the clear eyes. "It's Mr. Broome's wish that you go home with me to-day; so come—get ready and go."

The child stood silent a moment, looking about the room.

"How far is it to your home?" she asked.

"My house is the old stone house near the turnpike, with elm-trees all about it, and ivy covering the north wall."

"I remember," said the child; and, taking her cloak and bonnet, she went across the hall to an opposite room, putting them on as she went.

She opened a door, and he heard her say:

"Mrs. Neale, I am going away for a little while with a friend of Mr. Broome's. Perhaps I shall be gone a week or so; I don't know. But if you hear anyone knock in the night, will you be sure to see who it is? because it may be my dear father."

"Yes, Doris," said a soft, compassionate voice.

"Or perhaps he will come in the daytime. In either case, will you tell him that I am at the stone house by the turnpike?"

"I will tell him."

"Thank you. Good-bye. I shall come in every day or two, to know if you have any news of him."

"That is right."

"And, Mrs. Neale, if my father should come, and be sick or tired, or—anything the matter with him—will you be so very kind as to do anything which I would do if I were here, until you can send for me?"

"Yes, dear—certainly."

"Thank you—oh, thank you! Good-bye."

There was the sound of a kiss, and the child came back.

"I am ready," she said, quietly, to Anson.

The dog stood ready to go with her, and the three went out. They walked separately for a moment; then, with a sudden thought, Anson took the child's hand.

"So your name is Doris, is it?" he asked, speaking kindly.

"Yes," the child answered.

"A very pretty name. Do you think you shall like to live at my house, Doris?"

"I shall like to stay there a little while, as Mr. Broome wants me to do so. I couldn't live anywhere but at home, you know."

Anson was silent for a moment, deciding to leave to Broome the task of telling Doris that her only home was to be with him in future—that the furniture and pictures she cherished were to be stored for her, while everything else was at the disposal of the landlord. He anticipated a scene, and carefully kept clear of it.

He took her home, and vacated his own chamber for her, while he slept in one of the rooms of the main building. He was very much in earnest with his plan.

The next day, the rooms were renovated and thrown open, and a servant employed to keep them in order. An order was also sent for a piano, and the old harp was uncovered, and a teacher employed to give Doris instructions on both. The library shelves were filled with popular books, chosen with a view to the aim Anson had in view.

And to cap the climax of changes which astonished the neighbours, a party of children were invited to the

house, and contrived to make merry in the house and garden.

With Doris in hand, he went among them, using his best tact to make her familiar with them, and when they went away, giving them inducements to come again.

Many of them did. They strolled in the garden, and whooped in the orchard all that long summer; but Doris never could be induced to join in their sports.

The child had been educated out of her childhood by the sorrow of her early years, and she could never be made joyous.

Neither could she be made light-hearted. The music and books, the rooms and garden she enjoyed in her own quiet way; but the present, made as attractive as it was in Rufus Anson's power, never won her from the past, nor from the one care of her life.

That care was her father.

No interest for her equalled that. No happiness was equivalent to the thought of his anticipated return.

That return she waited for patiently, hopefully, day by day.

Rufus Anson watched her carefully. He found what he had not anticipated finding—a strength of character, not a weakness, which seemed the foundation of her love. Already his ground was shaken, when he attempted for the first time to corrupt her pure faith.

She was reading by the window. The sunshine flitted down through the elm-tree foliage upon the pages of her book. The housekeeper fancied her, and dressed her tastefully and prettily. Already she had been with Anson for nearly two months, and had become domesticated in the house, so that a certain content and comfort was in her air, as Anson observed her, that day. He had waited patiently, expecting time to do much of his work; but he thought that it had accomplished very little when he saw her suddenly lean over the low window-ledge and pat Rafe, who lay at her feet—murmuring, while her face grew softly and sadly luminous:

"Dear Rafe, dear Rafe! how papa used to love you!—when will he come back?"

Anson, who had been standing at the door, entered the room and sat down by her.

"Doris," said he, "I wouldn't think so much about my father, if I were you. He is probably very lost and dissipated by this time. He is your father, and I know you regard him differently from the way in which other people regard him; but you must know that he is no credit to you."

The words seemed spoken kindly, but their import sent a flush to the child's cheek. She was silent. Just then there arose a hooting and laughing in the street. Glancing from the window, they saw a drunken man pursued by a rabble of boys. Doris started up with a cry. If she had thought that it might be her father, she was instantly corrected; for the cap of the man fell off, and showed him to be an old man, with grizzled, grey hair. She sat down again, her face pale with distress.

"When a man gets low enough to disgrace himself, his friends had better shake themselves clear of him. He'll only cause them to be scoffed at, with himself."

Doris' cheeks were crimson again; but she did not speak.

"Persons who have any self-respect will keep themselves respectable, if possible; therefore you will get only slights and disparagements, Doris, if you disregard this rule through any mistaken sense of duty. Your father can lay no claim to your respect and fidelity. You have no call to sacrifice your duty to yourself through any regard for him. I advise you to forget him, and turn your thoughts to something better."

Anson left the room. The child sat still. It was very evident that a rush of feeling was going on within her. Her soul was hurt to the quick. While Anson's words had a certain effect of good sense and consistency, she could not apply them to her father without a feeling of sacrilege. Her father! She saw a delicate, blonde face, like her own, with lips too red and eyes too restless, but with a beautiful forehead and an exquisitely tender smile. She remembered the arm which had encircled her, and the slender white hand which had guided her fingers through innumerable drawing-lessons.

There were less pleasant thoughts; but they were very distinct, and had been held closely to her heart. She remembered some sad feeling apparent in her mother's face—some passions of remorse her father had suffered; periods of painful poverty and depression; yet still her father had been beautiful to her, and her mother lovely. It was almost as hard to hear the former defamed as the latter. She knew—she could not help knowing—that her father had sinned and suffered; but he was nevertheless her beloved father, for all that. She had never thought of separating herself from him, and loving herself more

than him. She could not accept the idea from Rufus Anson, though his words had their effect. She did not mention the name of her father again, though she hid it all the more securely in her heart; and often, as before, she went to the old place to know of Mrs. Neale if there had been any sound or sign of him.

CHAPTER III.

ONE day Broome came to the house. Anson was in his study, and Doris was in the garden, beneath the window.

"How do you get on with the child?" asked Broome, as he caught sight of her white dress amongst the bushes.

"She's as tractable as I expected. Since I told her that her father was a disgrace to her, she has not mentioned his name."

"Has she forgotten him?"

"Oh, no, I suppose not; but time will finish the work. She will finally shun him, as she shuns his name."

"The name may be treasured and stored, not shunned."

"Nonsense! it's not human nature for her to cling to anything she is ashamed of. When she is a few years older, and enters society, she will wish to ignore all that will lower her value in the eyes of the world."

"I think not—she—"

"I tell you yes! Three or four years from now she will probably have a lover. We'll say that he is respectable—belongs to a good family, &c. Do you suppose that she will choose to tell him that I am not her uncle, as most people suppose—that her father is strolling about the world somewhere, and is likely to turn up and claim kinship at any time? No. She will repudiate all mention of him, and find her affection turned to gall at thought of him!"

"As you would wish her to do if she were your child?" asked Broome.

"If I were a drunkard, I should probably be like others—as selfish, as unstable, as dangerous to my friends. And I should deserve the same treatment this Shepherd merits and will get."

Broome went down into the garden. Doris sprang to meet him, with glad pleasure. Her softly-tinted face, with the rich hair clustering about it, was more beautiful, with added health, than it had been a year before.

"Have you heard anything from my father?" she asked. "Something tells me that you have," she added, looking intently at him and paling.

"Yes; I have some news for you. Sit down here; you are pale."

He seated her in one of the garden chairs, and sat down beside her.

"Your father is in town, Doris."

"Where?" she interrupted; "oh, let me see him!"

"I do not know where he is now, my child; but listen to me. He came to my house last night. He looked very pale and haggard with dissipation; but he was not intoxicated then. He wanted to talk with me, and I gave him my attention. When he left you, he joined a set of wild and adventurous men, who were even more reckless than he had at first known; and you are old enough to know that he became so dissipated, so debauched, and given over to evil, that he was not fit to be seen by his wife and child. So he stayed away, drowning his conscience in drink, until he learned that your mother was dead, and that you were adopted by a wealthy man. The news only incited him to fresh desperation, and your poor father has been very low, my child. You are but a child in thought or feeling, Doris; and I think it my duty to tell you all this. But when I told your father that you did not remember him with abhorrence, that you yet loved him, as I was sure you did—and that you were intelligent and good—he broke into a fit of passionate weeping. When it was over, he looked up and said:—'God bless you for telling me that. I am going new. I make no promises; but tell my child to pray for me. Tell her I begged her to do it; and may God keep her pure lips fit for prayer.' That is what he said, Doris; I repeat to you the very words. Then he went away."

"Where?"

"I do not know. When I asked him when I should see him again, he said—'In a year, perhaps; perhaps never.'"

Doris was hardly fourteen years old; but she understood her friend's words to their fullest extent. Her love, more than her understanding, made her father's state and her duty clear to her.

"Oh! if he would only let me see him just for once—to tell him—to tell him what I want to say to him!" she cried, weeping.

"He preferred not to see you. Perhaps he is wiser than we are," said Broome, understanding her. He knew how her soul was full of assurances which she

wanted to give to her father for his help and strength.

"I would not tell your uncle," were Broome's last words when he left her. "It will not be pleasant for him to know, and you can do all that is required of you without—to wait and pray."

Doris had called Anson "uncle" at his request. As regards her feeling towards him, it was respect for his learning, compassion for his bodily illness, and gratitude for his treatment of her; but in her heart she had never loved him. We do not rule our hearts, a higher wisdom rules them; then let us trust them rather than our faulty judgment.

A year passed; two; then Doris was seventeen years old. She was pretty and lovely in appearance, and had a lover, as Anson had predicted.

Guy Sheldon was the son and heir of one of the wealthiest families in town. He had met Doris first at an exhibition, and had fallen in love in a downright, good, old-fashioned way. And Doris loved him—for his goodness and honour and truth—with all the strength of her pure, fresh heart.

Anson could make no objections to her choice. He could only warn her that she had a risk before her in marrying any man while her father lived.

The girl's heart sank. If Guy had a fault, it was pride of family. His ancestors had been respectable and wealthy, from the most remote generation. Though reasonable and kind, Doris viewed telling him of her disgraced father with unmistakable dread. No reasoning could remove from her mind the impression that Guy would receive the knowledge with surprise and pain. She bore the matter in mind for nearly a week; then she revealed to Anson her determination to confide utterly in Guy's affection.

"He loves me; I can trust him to bear any burden with me," she said.

"He may tell you that he does not care; but how will the Sheldons receive the fact of such an acquisition to their patrician family?" asked Anson, watching the agitated bloom upon the girl's face. It paled with pain.

"I wish—oh, I wish—" she began; then covered her face with her hands and burst into tears.

"That you had never been the child of such a father—oh?" asked Anson.

"No," said Doris, looking up. "My father is a better man than many more respected. God help him to be his true self some day, and know how I love him. I will tell Guy, and abide by his decision."

She turned to leave the room, but Anson stopped her.

"Think again," said he. "Perhaps your father is not living. It is very possible, and Guy Sheldon need never know his disgrace."

"O, I can't think that," she said, distressedly. "My father could not die and never see me again. No; I will believe that he will some time come back reformed, and that I shall be proud of him!"

Anson laughed scornfully; then he said:

"Think again, Doris. Living disgraces are worse than dead ones. I will tell you something I have never told any one. I was not an only son. I had a brother—an idle, roaming boy, somewhat talented, handsome and dissolute in tastes. At seventeen he commenced an irregular course of life—at twenty he was so reckless that my father disowned him, and his name was forbidden my lips. We heard afterwards of his assuming *aliases*, of his gambling, and of his painting meritorious pictures; but we never heard of his coming to any good. He became utterly depraved, and I only hope that he is dead. For I tell you, girl, that family pride is strong in old patrician families. Such scions of our race are sharp thorns to us. That boy blots one of the fairest countenances ever displayed. Curse him for a shame upon us!" he said, with sudden passion.

Doris shrank back.

"Oh," she said, "there is so much wrong in the world! Yet I don't think harshness makes it any better. Punishment never wins one from wickedness. Kindness may win them to something higher than even family honour."

There was something grand and strong in the girl's eyes. For a moment Rufus Anson felt the power of love like a blinding light, but he was only dazzled to bewilderment; he could not apprehend the height and breadth of the idea, nor accept it. He drew back uncomfortably, saying:

"Women know nothing but how to forgive, and be abused for their weakness; they have no sense of right and justice;" but his words sounded hollow even to himself.

Doris told Guy Sheldon the story of her father's sin and shame. He listened gravely; then said, frankly:

"I tell you candidly, Doris, that I am sorry to be told this. Of course I honour you for a true, brave girl in relating what you might possibly have kept hid—but my family will regret sorely the facts of your father's life. As for me, I hope I have something

stronger than the sense of family pride with which to receive such an assurance. I never shall love you one whit the less for your misfortune, but honour you the more for the faithful love and pity you still bear your unhappy father. So true a daughter is worth a hundred inferior girls who might bring their husbands blameless family records."

So the great weight was taken from Doris' heart.

It was agreed that they were to be married in the autumn. The summer passed away. All through its months Doris seemed very happy, but in her heart was a continual care, and from her soul arose the old prayer that her father might be restored to her. It was her anxious wish to see him, to look upon his face, if only for an instant, whereby to be assured of the faith she often held blindly. Viewed in any light but by the purest and highest, her courage to hope for her father died away. It seemed idle to believe that he had reformed, while three years had passed since he had received the assurance of his daughter's love, and he had not appeared to her sight. Then where was he lingering without hope or courage? The girl's heart would have carried her over the most stony and thorny places to give him tangible proof of her devotion, and to strengthen him with her presence.

At last the wedding morning came. It was a clear, November day when Doris was dressed by a crowd of eager young girls, all delighted with the bridal and the pretty bride who came so lovingly from under their hand.

At last Rufus Anson knocked at the door.

"Ready?" he called.

"Yes," and Doris came out. He looked at her gravely, nodded approvingly, and gave her his arm.

"I suppose you are quite happy?" he asked. "Oh, Doris—" He was about to make some trite remark on the short-lived joy of marriage, when she interrupted him by answering his question.

"No," she said, "not quite happy, because my father isn't here."

And Anson was silent.

They entered the crowded rooms. As they crossed the rooms, Frank Broome came to meet them with a gentleman unknown to them. Doris did not hear the name until he was introduced to her. It was Anson. She gave a quick upward look at a pale, sad face, with a blonde beard and eyes, and then her pallid lips faltered the word:

"Father!"

"Do you know me, my child? Doris, my darling," he murmured.

They were both very pale, but the father's tones were steady as he looked at Anson, who stood dumb-founded by this episode.

"Mr. Anson, I am Doris' father; and if it be her wish, will you grant me the privilege of giving away my child? I ask the favour, who have prior claims to yours upon her guardianship."

He spoke sadly, but calmly and firmly.

"It is as Doris pleases," replied Anson. "But I beg to understand this matter better before her answer is given. Her name is Shepperd, and yours Anson. Will you explain?"

"Her name is Anson. She has as much right to the name as you have, my brother. As for me, I did what I could towards saving it from disgrace in years gone by. I put it off and took the *alias* of Shepperd. It was the name I was married with. To-night I give her her own. Do you know me, Rufus?"

Rufus Anson did not speak. Gazing a moment at his brother—the brother he had accused and wished dead—he dropped Doris' arm, which instantly sought her father's. But Leonard Anson still looked at his brother.

"With your permission," he said, gently.

"You have it," answered Rufus, briefly, and Doris moved with her father, very pale, but murmuring under her breath:

"My father! my dear father! This is all I wanted to be happy."

The exchange was explained to Guy and the clergyman—the guests were left to wonder—and the ceremony commenced.

It was finished, and Doris Sheldon stood happy, with husband and father. After the ceremony and the wedding breakfast were over, and the family left to themselves, Rufus Anson made his confession:

"Doris, I did not adopt you from kindness or benevolence. It was a bad heart that gave you a home, a cynical experiment which caused you to become my child. I tried to teach you to regard your father as harshly as I treated him. I acknowledge that I have done my best to destroy your faith in love, and you have conquered me. You are right. Love is stronger, higher, truer, than anything else in the world. Leonard, you owe me no thanks for the charge of your daughter, but may she prove as blessed to you as she has done to me. I am a better man for my test."

He proved it. Leonard received from him a brother's sympathy and assistance in the new life he had begun;

and he lived to learn patience and cheerfulness and to bless Doris' children.

If there had been any doubt as to Leonard Anson's identity, it would have disappeared on the day after the wedding, when Rafe was let into the house. The dog crouched at his master's feet, and whined with the fulness of a heart overcharged with joy; then leapt to the wanderer's breast and lavished frantic caresses upon him. From that hour to the last day of his life he never willingly left him.

Leonard Anson did not return poor. With the price of a few pictures, he set up a studio as an artist; and every morning before the door stand the carriages of the aristocracy, but the artist's face lights up at the coming of but one lady: that is Mrs. Guy Sheldon, his daughter. To others he is courteous and reserved; to her he is unspeakably tender.

F. H. M.

THE ARCHDUKE.

A TALE OF THE MEXICAN EMPIRE

CHAPTER III.

My heart is heavy!
My peace is o'er;
I shall find it never—
Oh! never more!

Fant.

THE brave little captive did not immediately cease her struggles, but she might as well have saved her strength.

The grasp of her captor tightened with every movement she made, and the smile with which he had welcomed her into captivity became a grim aser, in mockery of her effects.

And it was then that the horrors of her situation crowded upon her thoughts.

A prisoner in the hands of the Comanches! What a realization it was to come over the soul of such a delicate young girl! What degradation was implied in her situation, unless relief should speedily reach her!

Assured that she could not escape, she looked around upon the moving masses of horses and cattle, upon the yelling savages, and all the wild features of the scene, so far as the darkness and the dust arising from so many feet would let her.

How horrible the scene was!

Half-stifled with the dust, heated with her exertions, and with her senses in such a whirl that all the strange sights and sounds around became sickening, a less courageous soul must have been shocked beyond endurance.

On, on, went the wild array, in dust and confusion; the warriors in paint and feathers on their half tamed mustangs, and the more menial portion of the band hurrying afoot, in the rear and on the flanks of their living booty, the whole appearing spectral and unearthly in the ghastly moonlight.

The savages had journeyed about a couple of hours, when they were joined at a cross road by a larger body of Indians, who drove herds of cattle, mules, and horses, and who greeted their comrades with exultant cries.

The Indian having charge of Ada proved to be a chief; and, after a few minutes' interchange of views with the new comers, gave orders to move on, which they obeyed.

They went swiftly on all night towards the west, across plains, through woods, and over small streams, halting in the early morning on an open space in some woods.

Here they dismounted from their horses, and Ada's captor lifted her off his horse and regarded her earnestly and approvingly, although she shrank from him with fear and disgust.

He was a tall, brawny savage, dressed like his companions, in a loin-cloth and leggings, with a dressed buffalo skin thrown over his shoulders a broad sash, ornamented with beads tied about his waist, and a head-dress covered with beads, strips of red cloth, and adorned with two or three pendant cow-tails, and some feathers. His ears and nose were ornamented with large silver rings, and his face was rendered hideous by huge daubs of red, blue, and yellow dyes.

"Good!" said this personage, in Spanish, as his admiring glances lingered on the face and form of his lovely captive. "You pretty. You be the wife of Nani?"

Ada looked up, with an agonized expression in her eyes; but once glance, by daylight, at the villainous face and flabby lips, the thick, jewelled nose and gloating eyes of Nani, told her that it would be vain to hope for mercy from him.

She remembered that the Comanches invariably bear off to their retreats the women and children they encounter in their excursions, training the latter as their own, and taking the former to wife, if the term of marriage may be applied to the brutal relation of the captor to his victim.

What a sickening prospect it was for her! That

this was to be her fate she had not doubted during the long hours of anguish she had already passed; but a keener realization of her horrible prospect now came over her, and she recoiled, and would have fallen but for the support of Nani.

"Hungry?" he muttered, seating her on a huge stone. "Here, Lala," he added, with a sudden shout, "come hither."

As he spoke, a weird-looking, withered Indian woman emerged from a group composed of a dozen of her own sex, and approached the chief, who gave her instructions to guard the captive and not lose sight of her, and then went off to his men.

As he turned away, Ada roused herself and looked about her in the hope of finding an avenue of escape. All around her were groups of Indians in a state of high enjoyment, yet all active and on the alert, so that a single cry from the old woman would bring a dozen of them upon her in a moment. Lank Indian dogs wandered hither and thither among the groups, sniffing eagerly for some sign of a meal, which was soon in progress.

A quantity of brush and dry articles were collected into the centre of the open space, and a large fire was kindled. An ox was killed, its flesh being distributed among the squaws for cookery. The choicest piece was reserved for the chief, and was held on the end of a large knife over the fire, by an old woman, until the outside was blackened and burned, and was then taken to Nani.

The chief gave a grunt of approval, took the meat, devoting his attention to it, until there was but a small red piece left, and this he handed to the woman and pointed to Ada. The mute command was obeyed, and the morsel was presented to the captive, who declined it with loathing.

"Eat!" said Lala. "White girl be sick if she don't eat!"

Ada shook her head and replied: "I am thirsty. Give me drink!"

The woman retreated with the piece of meat, and Lala beckoned a boy, and addressed him a few words in their own language; upon hearing which, he disappeared among the trees, soon returning with a gourd shell filled with cold water from a spring, and a basket of fruits that had originally come from the *tierras calientes*.

Ada drank the water eagerly, her mouth being parched with thirst, and took some of the bananas, chirimoyas, and oranges, with the resolve to husband her strength, although her future looked now dark.

It was easy for her to see that she was the only prisoner the Indians had taken, and that more than one dusky face was bent admiringly upon her, as if envying their chief his prize, as well as that she was an object of envy and jealousy to the squaws.

The breakfast over, the order was given to resume the journey, and Ada was placed behind Lala upon a horse, and they rode away in the midst of a group of savages, still in a westerly direction.

The country through which they passed was blooming with verdure, and fragrant with the perfume of flowers, while the songs of rare birds gave an added charm to the scene; but all these beauties were unnoticed by Ada. Here and there, on a sunny hillside, was nestled an adobe cottage, but not a sign of its occupants was to be seen, and the Indians were evidently in too great haste to attack the mimic fortresses. They passed over wild plains, carpeted with green and sprinkled with lovely flowers, that gave forth sweet fragrance under the tread of the cattle and horses; over arid, desert-like fields, where the glare of the sun was reflected from the burning sands, causing the captive's eyes to ache and her cheeks to burn; through pathless forests where the soft dim shade, with its gentle coolness seemed like a very heaven; over streams where cattle, horses, and savages, all stopped to drink and refresh themselves; on, until the burning sun sank beneath the western horizon, and then they came to a halt.

The spot chosen for the night's encampment was a long and wide ravine between a couple of mountains, and having a passage at each end, opening upon this ravine. The cattle and horses were driven into this ravine, and the Indians divided themselves into two parties, one stationing itself at each end of the ravine, to guard their animals, and prevent their escape. Scouts were placed on the look out for any enemy, and the evening meal was prepared and eaten with great relish, after the parched corn that had formed the frugal dinner of the savages.

Ada felt hungry and weary, and therefore ate a small piece of burned meat without the repugnance she had experienced towards it in the morning, and refreshed herself with fruit and water.

The Comanches sat awhile around their dying fire, conversing with each other, and then stretched themselves upon the ground, while their chief looked after his captive, bound her arms, and attached the rope to the wrist of Lala, and then retired to the centre of the group formed by his men, and retired to sleep.

It was a lovely, cloudless night, the moon and stars shining in royal splendour and flooding the ravine with a pale light; and Ada looked up through the rifts in the foliage of the trees, and watched the procession of the celestial hosts with a weary and desolate pain at her heart. She had no hope of rescue, remembering that her father was absent from home, and that no one at the hacienda was aware of his precise whereabouts but herself, and realising that the farm labourers would not think of pursuing so large a band of savages. She knew that as soon as the Comanches reached their home, Nani would compel her to become his wife, and that henceforward a life of bondage would be hers; so she prayed with the energy of despair and desperation that she might die before becoming the wife of the chief.

For hours Ada lay awake, listening to the songs and calls of the night birds, or the deep breathing of the savages, or the few movements of the guards; but at length her exhaustion overcame her, and she slept.

When she awakened it was early morning, and the savages were all astir. The odour of burning meat came to her senses, and she arose and looked around her. Lala had disengaged herself from her charge, and had unbound her, and was now sitting quietly at her side.

"White girl not sleep for good long," said the crone, grimly; "but when she slept, slept well. Feel better?"

Ada replied briefly in the affirmative, and asked for water, which was brought by an Indian lad. She then bathed her face and hands, and wet her hair, using her pocket-handkerchief as a towel, and combed her locks as well as she could with her fingers. Her simple toilet attracted considerable attention from the unkempt squaws, who regarded her with a sort of grim merriment, which was unheeded by the captive.

She ate some breakfast, and soon after was again mounted behind Lala, and the savages again resumed their journey, driving the cattle on ahead, and the two parties reunited soon after leaving the ravine.

The ride was similar to that of the day before, only it seemed to Ada that the sun appeared more brassy and unclouded, the air dryer and more sultry, the sands lighter and more like a mirror, the lonely roads dustier, and a haze or mist seemed drawn over everything. The deep anguish that had rent her heart ever since her capture gave place to a gnawing pain, while her head throbed and her pulse beat faintly and wearily, and half the time she was compelled by her sense of weakness to lean against the back of Lala for support.

At sunset of the second day, the party approached some extensive ruins in the western part of the state of Zacatecas, and supposed to be the relics of ancient temples, built by a former people.

Ada had often heard of them, and now looked up with something of interest, and beheld terraces, truncated pyramids, of cut stone, surmounted by peculiarly shaped edifices of the same material, covered with figures of men and animals in relief, or stucco artificial terraces, corridors paved and roofed, stone figures, some of them ten feet high, standing by the side of stone altars; interlaced stucco-work, resembling ornamental lattices, and broken columns, were in profusion. Many of the pyramids were covered with a thick growth of vegetation, through which the ruined temple on its summit showed like a sentinel of ages, and the broken shafts were twined with flowery vines and creepers, as if nature were trying to cover up and beautify the wrecks that time had made.

To this spot the Comanches came, encamping amid the ruins, and proceeding to prepare their supper.

The place is called *Los Edificios*, or the edifices; and it is one of those remarkable relics of a forgotten civilization for which Mexico is noted.

And here Ada seated herself, exhausted with her long and weary journey, yet still more deeply pained by the prospects of her future.

She had gathered from the conversation of the savages that they would, on the morrow, start direct for their retreat, hundreds of miles away, and she well knew that, once in their dens, there was no likelihood of her escape.

The grand old ruins around her occupied her a few moments, filling her with strange thoughts respecting their builders, the nameless people who had lived, loved, and suffered on that very plain, thousands of years ago; but the spell of their gloomy magnificence was soon ended, and then her pains and perils exhausted her hopes, and she found herself confronting the blackest despair.

CHAPTER IV.

The time is precious! Let us talk openly:

You know how matters stand here.

Schiller.

I am grown so timorous, every trifling noise

Scatters my spirits, and announces to me

The footsteps of some messenger of evil.

Ibid.

A few miles south of Zacatecas, towards Ojo Caliente, there could have been seen, at the date as-

signed to this story, a small but beautiful estate belonging to the Marquis de Valde, one of the most honoured noblemen of the country.

The *residencia*, a handsome villa, of mixed American and European architecture, is approached from the road by a wide avenue, a quarter of a mile in length, and in front of the building stretches a green lawn, shaded by clumps of trees, while in its rear are orchards, pastures, and gardens.

On the morning subsequent to the capture of Ada Mar by the Comanches, the marquis entered the wide and paved inner court of his dwelling, and paced restlessly back and forth around its central fountain, in which bloomed gorgeous water-lilies, of snowy whiteness, emitting a slumberous fragrance.

He was a man of middle age, tall and handsome, with a countenance indicative of wisdom and goodness, and a mien that was dignified without being haughty. The paleness of his features, in connection with their thinness, showed that his health was impaired, and there was an earnestness and sensibility in their expression which pronounced him a man of generous impulses and exquisitely sensitive feelings.

"No signs of him yet," he sighed, looking up at the fall beams of day. "Heaven grant that I may soon see him!"

His eye fell upon a fresh journal placed on a table in the court for his perusal; and he picked it up, spending a few moments in examining it. But its records of strife, wrong, and sorrow, touched him deeply, and he soon laid it down, murmuring:

"Would to God that this succession of evils might be stopped! Unhappy Mexico! always a prey to civil dissensions! always distracted by rival chieftains! overrun and laid waste by savages! and now about to fall into the hands of foreign adventurers. Would that I had health and strength, that I might again wield a sword in defence of my country!"

A venerable old servitor came into the court at this juncture, saluting his master respectfully, and said:

"I have been on the roof, but see no signs of a horseman approaching."

"Thanks, Rafael, for this thoughtfulness. Let us hope that our brave captain is near us."

The servitor echoed the prayer.

"Near or distant," continued the marquis, while his face glowed with fatherly pride, "my noble boy is a blessing and honour to me; for which I can never be sufficiently grateful. Young as he is, what a name he has made us? what glorious deeds he has done for his country?"

"Hernan is indeed a son to gladden a father's heart," responded the old servitor. "How impatient I am to see him."

"And yet his glorious career is a source of constant anxiety to me," added the marquis. "What if some of the bullets he is continually braving should strike him! What if he were already in the hands of his enemies!"

"Impossible! We could not live without him! No, no—he will be spared to us. We shall soon see him."

The earnestness of the faithful old servant inspired the marquis with additional hopes, and he rejoined:

"Well, Rafael, I will comfort myself with this assurance. Have my breakfast delayed half-an-hour, in the hope Hernan will be here to share it. Have some birds and other hearty food, in addition to my usual fruits and chocolate."

The servitor bowed and withdrew, and the marquis left the court, passing through a narrow archway to the lawn outside, where he resumed his walk, keeping an anxious gaze fixed upon the avenue and the road.

Nearly half-an-hour had passed, when there came from the old servitor, who had again proceeded to the house-top, the glad cry:

"He's coming! he's coming!"

"Thank heaven!" cried the marquis, sinking into a rustic seat beside which he chanced to be passing.

"He said he would be with us this morning. He's as punctual as ever."

The expected son rode swiftly up the road leading from Ojo Caliente, dashed into the avenue, and the next instant leaped from his foaming steed, and was clasped to the breast of his father.

He was indeed a son worthy of the old man's pride and tender affection.

With a heavy frame, compactly built, and supple as a panther's—with eyes as keen as a hawk's, yet full of the goodness and tenderness inseparable from a lofty spirit; and with a countenance that was bronzed by exposure to the sun, and radiant with chivalrous feelings—he was the beau ideal of a hero returned from the wars.

And such he was.

A mere youth at college when the allied fleet anchored off Vera Cruz, December 8, 1861, he had gone home, obtained authority from the Government, and raised a company of guerrillas, which had ever since been waging an incessant war upon the invaders.

Operating chiefly on the national road between Vera Cruz and the capital, he had frequently interrupted the communications of the French, cut off their scouts and detached parties, and even assailed their army columns with such daring and consummate ability that his name had become a terror to them, and a large reward had been offered for his capture.

Familiar with the secret retreats of the highlands and table-lands, and often changing the field of his operations, he had managed to avoid all the forces sent out to hunt him, and to visit his father so quietly that they had not yet received any hints to seek him in that quarter.

Such was Captain Hernan de Valde, the famous guerrilla chief.

He was about twenty-three years of age; tall, and well-proportioned; with black hair and moustache, black eyes, and strongly-marked and clear-cut features; every one of which indicated his nobleness, courage, and intelligence.

As manly as he looked, there rested on his fine lips, as he greeted his father, a smile of almost feminine sweetness; and that betokened a soul of unusual purity and goodness.

"Home again, dear father," he said. "I have come to make you a good visit."

The old servitor came forward, and received a kind greeting; and then our hero drew the arm of the marquis in his own, and they passed through the narrow archway and court into a pleasant apartment.

"How natural everything looks!" said Hernan. "From my father's face to the very marble paving the court, how familiar everything looks to me!"

The marquis smiled affectionately upon him, and rejoined:

"Your pleasure cannot be greater than mine my son. But is it possible that you can remain some days or weeks with me?"

"Yes, father. The French are pressing us this way, and President Juarez thinks we cannot do better than to retreat before them, and reserve our forces against the time when circumstances will be more favourable to us. It is concluded that the French will occupy more territory, and that the new empire will be set up; but the end is not yet. President Juarez's policy is to husband his resources—years, if necessary—and wait until the invaders and their allies fall into dissensions among themselves."

"That's his best course. The French are sure to quarrel with the church party, and Maximilian will, ere long, be at variance with both. The policy of the Liberals is to wait quietly, organize, and be prepared to act as opportunities offer. But breakfast is ready, and you must be hungry. I thought you would ride in the cool hours of the morning, as promised in your letter, but did not dare set my heart upon your coming."

He took Hernan's arm, and they passed into an adjoining room, where an elegant breakfast awaited them.

When they had done ample justice to it, they returned to the sitting-room, and Hernan said:

"You spoke in your last letter, father, of wishing to see me, on particular business, as soon as possible, and that is why I hastened my coming. My guerrillas are with the president, as his body guard, under command of my lieutenant, and we have concluded to take a rest and recruit. You are not feeling worse than usual?"

"No, my son; on the contrary, I feel better than at any time during the past year. The solicitude expressed in my letter did not concern my health."

He drew his chair close to his son's, and resumed, in a low tone:

"You know, Hernan, where we stand, and what are our perils in the actual state of our country. You are liable to be taken prisoner, and sent to France, Martinique, or to a dungeon in some nearer place. And I, as your supporter, as a supporter of Juarez, and as a well-known enemy of the French-Austrian scheme, am also liable to be imprisoned. In case of such calamities befalling us, our property would be confiscated, of course, as we have long foreseen."

The guerrilla chief nodded assent, and the marquis continued:

"Well, realizing that the war will be long, that property is insecure, and so on, I have finished converting our landed estates into money, so as to be ready for any emergency. Our last place is gone, with the exception of this homestead, and our wealth accordingly exists in the form of gold coin. It is in regard to this money that I wished to consult with you. If it should become known that I have such large sums in the house, I should be robbed by brigands, or receive a visit from some of the French officials; that would amount to the same thing. Hence, while I have this money in the house it is a source of continual anxiety to me. What shall I do with it? where will it be safest?"

Hernan was thoughtful a moment, and then answered:

"The best plan is to bury it in some secure place. It is already known that you have sold a great deal of land, and received a great deal of gold. As you indicate, we are liable to be visited by Frenchmen at any moment. In addition, there are robbers and Indians in organized bands; to say nothing of the straggling plunderers who always exist in such an unsettled state of society. I can comprehend your anxieties on this subject, dear father, and feel that the sooner we secure the money the better."

"I have thought of burying it," said the Marquis; "but I do not like to bury it here, as a general search of the premises would be sure to follow any hostile movement in the matter. We must select a spot at some distance—some out-of-the-way place, which we would have no difficulty in finding again, and which would not occur to our enemies."

"I have it!" said Hernan, after a brief pause, "we will bury it at Los Edificios. The place is off the great routes, you know; only a day and a half distant, and is never visited save by some curious traveller or wandering Indian. I can transport the money on mules, leaving here at dead of night, so as not to be seen!"

"A good suggestion, Hernan, if the ruins are still deserted, and if the way is open to them. Years have passed since we visited them, and there may now be a village there, or some other occupation fatal to our project. Had you not better make a journey to the ruins, before taking the money thither, and select a spot for its concealment?"

"Yes; the money is safer where it is than it would be in being carried about the country without any certainty as to the place of its concealment. And as we cannot move too soon in this business, I will set out on my reconnaissance in a couple of hours!"

"I am sorry to lose your society so soon, my son," said the marquis, sadly; "but the necessity of a move is urgent. Perhaps it would have been better to bury the money on the estate—"

"No, father. In case of trouble, a search would be made, and any newly moved earth be examined. Moreover, if the place of the money's concealment should escape detection, we should not have a chance, if the homestead should be confiscated and occupied, to dig up the treasure. No—we'll bury it at Los Edificios, or in such other suitable place as may offer!"

"Well, my son, this business settled, I'll show you the money, that you may form your own ideas about its removal!"

The marquis lighted a small silver lamp which he took from a tiny cupboard in the wall, and led the way from the room into a smaller apartment, and thence by a flight of stone stairs into a cellar, closing the door behind them. The floor was paved with stones of irregular size, and presented an unbroken surface, but the marquis handing the light to Hernan, and producing a small iron bar, knelt near the centre of the apartment, and commenced lifting up some of the stones.

"You see that I have concealed the money in the secret cellar," he said. "Certainly no place hereabouts can be safer."

The stones were soon removed from a space two feet square, and it was then seen that these had rested upon an iron grating; and this removed, there was a narrow flight of stone steps, leading into a sub-cellar, into which the two men quietly descended.

"Here is the money, my son," said the father, taking the lamp from Hernan's hand, and pointing to several strong iron chests of good size, which were ranged along the wall.

"No one shares your confidence in regard to this treasure then, father?" inquired the captain.

"No one but yourself."

The marquis took a bunch of keys from his pocket, and proceeded to unlock chest after chest, until but one was left secured; and then he flung back their lids, and flashed his light over their contents.

They were filled with piles of glittering yellow gold and massive gold bricks, that shone in the dim light, looking more like the realization of some old Arabian tale than the sober reality.

"It looks nice," said Hernan, quietly. "Is this all?"

"All the gold. The other chest looks better."

He unlocked the remaining chest, which was small enough to be called a casket, displaying on silk cushioned trays a large quantity of splendid diamonds and other precious stones.

The diamonds were of the first water, and of enormous value, flashing and shining in starry radiance; and underneath two trays, filled with them, was a deeper tray filled with sapphires, rubies, and large milk-white pearls, with here and there a gleaming and precious opal.

"I begin to share your anxiety in regard to this wealth, father," said the captain, gravely. "Still, it

may be in no immediate danger, as the existence of the cellar is not known."

He took the lamp from his father's hand, while the marquis looked the chests, and then assisted him up the stairs, replacing the iron grating behind them, and restoring the stone flagging to its former position, and they then proceeded to the sitting-room.

Here the father and son spent a couple of hours in affectionate communion, and Rafael was then summoned to prepare a basket of food for his young master, and to order out a horse for the proposed journey.

The servitor hastened to obey, soon returning with a large basket, laden with roast game, pots of jelly, some potted meats, two or three bottles of wine, and other delicacies. A fresh horse was brought to the door, and a small bag of barley flung on the saddle, and Hernan then took a tender leave of his father.

"Be careful of yourself, dear father," he said, as he embraced him before springing on his saddle. "I shall hasten back as quickly as possible, in order to relieve you of the weight of care the presence of so much money gives you. Adieu! adieu!"

He wrung his father's hand, tore himself from his clinging embrace, vaulted upon his horse, and dashed down the avenue, followed by the anguished gaze of the marquis, who murmured:

"Why do I feel this strange foreboding? What can be the meaning of the horrible presentiment that suddenly weighs upon me like an incubus?"

Striving to fling off his sadness, which he condemned as weakness, he entered the house, while Hernan passed out of the gates and down the road.

(To be continued.)

ANCIENT AND MODERN HUMBUGS OF THE WORLD.

No. 11.—COUNT CAGLIOSTRO, alias JOSEPH BALSAMO, KNOWN ALSO AS "CURSED JOE."

ONE of the most striking, amusing, and instructive pages in the history of humbugs ever seen, is the life of Count Alessandro di Cagliostro, whose real name was Joseph or Guiseppe Balsamo. He was born at Palermo, in 1743, and very early began to manifest his brilliant talents for roguery.

He ran away from his first boarding-school, at the age of eleven or twelve; getting up a masquerade of goblins, by the aid of some freakish schoolfellows, which frightened the monkish watchmen of the gates away from their posts, nearly dead with terror. He had gained little at this school, except the pleasant surname of Beppo Maladetto (or Cursed Joe). At the age of thirteen he was a second time expelled, from the Convent of Castegirone.

After this, although admitted into the pious Order of the Ben Fratelli, or Good Brethren, Master Joe proceeded to distinguish himself by forging opera-tickets, and even documents of various kinds, indiscriminately pilfering and swindling, interpreting visions, conjuring, and finally, it is declared, a touch of genuine assassination.

Pretty soon he made a foolish greedy goldsmith, one Marano, believe that there was a treasure hidden in the sand on the sea-shore near Palermo, and induced the silly man to go one night and dig it up. Having reached the spot, the dupe was made to strip himself to his shirt and drawers, a magic circle was drawn round him with all sorts of ceremonies, and Beppo, exhorting him not to leave the ring lest the spirits should kill him, stepped out of sight to make the incantations to raise them. Almost instantly, six devils, horned, hooved, tailed, and clawed, breathing fire and smoke, leaped from among the rocks, and beat the wretched goldsmith senseless, and almost to death.

They were, of course, Cursed Joe and some confederates; and taking Marano's money and valuables, they left him. He got home in wretched plight, but had sense enough left to suspect Master Joe, whom he shortly promised, after the Sicilian manner, to assassinate. So Joe ran away from Palermo, and went to Messina. Here he fell in with a venerable humbug, named Atholias, an "Armenian Sage," who united his talents with Beppo's own, in making a peculiar preparation of flax and hemp, and passing it off upon the people of Alexandria, in Egypt, as a new kind of silk. This feat made not only a sensation, but plenty of money; and the two swindlers now traversed Greece, Turkey, and Arabia, in various directions, stirring up the Oriental "old fogies" in amazing style. Harems and palaces were thrown open to them everywhere, and while the sherif of Mecca took Balsamo under his high protection, one of the grand muftis actually gave him splendid apartments in his own abode. It is only necessary to reflect upon the unbounded reverence felt by all good Mussulmen for these exalted dignitaries to comprehend the height of distinction thus attained by the Palermo thimble-rigger. But, among the many obscure records

that exist in the Italian, French, and German languages, touching this arch-impostor, there is a hint of night-adventure in the harem of a high and mighty personage, at Mecca, whereby the latter was put out of doors, with his robes torn and his beard singed, by his own domestics, and left to wander in the streets; while Beppo, in disguise, received the salaams, and sequins of the establishment, including the attentions of the fair ones therein caged, for an entire night. His escape to the sea-coast after this adventure was almost miraculous, but escape he did; and shortly afterward turned up in Rome, with the title (conferred by himself) of Count Cagliostro, the reputation of enormous wealth, and genuine and enthusiastic letters of recommendation from Pinto, Grand Master of the Knights of Malta. Pinto was an alchemist, and had been fooled to the top of his bent by the cunning Joseph.

These letters introduced our humbug into the first families of Rome; who, like some other first families, were first also as fools. He also married a very beautiful, very shrewd, and very wicked Roman donzella, Lorenza Feliciani by name; and the worthy couple, combining their various talents, and regarding the world as their oyster, at once proceeded to open it in the most scientific style. It is needless to follow this human chameleon in all his transformations, under his various names of Pischio, Melissa, Fenice, Anna, Pellegrini, Harat, and Belmonte, or state the studies and processes by which he picked up sufficient knowledge of physics, chemistry, the hidden properties of numbers, astronomy, astrology, mesmerism, clairvoyance, and the genuine old-fashioned "black art;" he travelled through every part of Europe, and set it in a blaze with excitement.

There were always enough of silly coxcombs, young and old, of high degree, to be allured by the siren smiles of his "Countess;" and dupes of both sexes everywhere, to swallow his yarns and gape at his juggleries. In the course of his rambles, he paid a visit to his great brother-humbug, the Count of St. Germain, in Westphalia, or Schleswig, and it was not long afterward that he began to publish to the world his grand discoveries in Alchemy, of the Philosopher's Stone, and the Elixir of Life, or Waters of Perpetual Youth. These and many similar wonders were declared to be the result of his investigations under the Arch of Old Egyptian Masonry, which degree he claimed to have revived. In this new structure, he assumed the title of the "Grand Cophta," and actually claimed the worship of his followers; declaring that the institution had been established by Enoch and Elias, and that he had been summoned by "spiritual" agencies to restore it to its pristine glory.

In fact, this pretension, which influenced thousands upon thousands of believers, was one of the most daring impostures that ever saw the light; and it is astounding to think that, so late as 1780, it should, for a long time, have been entirely successful.

The preparatory course of exercises for admission to the mystic brotherhood has been described as a series of "purgation, starvation, and desperation," lasting for forty days; and ending in "physical regeneration" and an immortality on earth.

The celebrated Lavater, mild and genial, but feeble as he was, became one of Cagliostro's disciples, and was bamboozled to his heart's content—in fact, made to believe that the count could put the devil into him, or take him out, as the case might be.

The wondrous "Water of Beauty," that made old, wrinkled faces look young, smooth, and blooming again, was the special merchandise of the countess, and was, of course, in great request among the faded beaux and dowagers of the day, who were easily persuaded of their restored loveliness. The transmutation of base metals into gold usually terminated in the transmigration of all the gold his victims had into the count's own purse.

In 1776, the count and countess came to London. Here, funnily enough, they fell into the hands of a gambler, a chyster, and a female scamp, who together tormented them almost to death, because the count would not pick them out lucky numbers to gamble by.

They persecuted him fairly into jail, and plagued and outwitted him so awfully that, after a time, the poor count sneaked back to the continent with only fifty pounds left out of three thousand which he had brought with him.

One incident of Cagliostro's English experience was the affair of the "Arsenical Pigs," a notice of which may be found in the *Public Advertiser*, of London, of September 3, 1786.

A Frenchman, named Morando, was at that time editing a paper in his own language, entitled *Le Courier de l'Europe*, and lost no opportunity to denounce the count as a humbug.

Cagliostro, at length, irritated by these repeated attacks, published in the *Advertiser* an open challenge, offering to forfeit five thousand guineas if Morando should not be found dead in his bed on the morning

after partaking of the flesh of a pig, to be selected by himself from among a drove fattened by the count—the cookin', &c., all to be done at Morando's own house, and under his own eye.

The time was fixed for this singular repast; but when it came round the French editor "backed out" completely, to the great delight of his opponent and his credulous followers.

Cagliostro and his spouse now resumed their travels upon the continent, and, by their usual arts and trades in great measure renewed their fallen fortunes. Among other new dodges, he now assumed so supernatural a piety that he said he could distinguish an unbeliever by the smell! which, of course, was just the opposite to the "odour of sanctity." The count's claim to have lived for hundreds of years was, by some, thoroughly believed. He ascribed his immortality to his own Elixir, and his comparatively youthful appearance to his "Water of Beauty;" his countess readily assisting him by speaking of her son, a colonel in the Dutch service, fifty years old, while she appeared scarcely more than twenty.

At length, in Rome, he and the countess fell into the clutches of the Holy office; and both having been tried for their manifold offences against the church, were found guilty, and in spite of their contrition and eager confessions, immured for life—the count within the walls of the castle of St. Leone, in the duchy of Urbino, where, after eight years' imprisonment, he died in 1795, and the countess died some time after, in a suburban convent.

The celebrated story of the Diamond Necklace, in which Cagliostro, Marie Antoinette, the Cardinal de Rohan, and others were mixed in such a hodge-podge of rascality and folly forms a well-known story.

P. T. B.

(To be continued.)

SCIENCE.

A FIRE-ENGINE for the Russian Government has been manufactured by Messrs. Shand and Mason, and is a size larger than the engine which obtained the gold medal and first money prize at the contest in Holland. It will throw a jet of water 12 inches in diameter 200 feet high, and to a distance of 300 feet.

ELECTRICITY FROM THE SUN'S RAYS.

At a meeting of the British Association, after the usual preliminaries, Mr. H. Keevil read a paper on "The Development of Electricity from the Rays of the Sun and other Sources of Light," which he illustrated by the exhibition of indicators or needles suspended within two exhausted glass receivers, and which he showed were operated upon by the action of rays of light.

A member inquired how the author knew that the motion resulted not from electricity, but air remaining in the receiver?

Mr. Keevil did not know it; but merely gave his own impression, trusting that others would make their own observations. The air had been exhausted by the pump in the usual way.

Mr. F. Jenkin remarked that those who had been in the habit of making experiments with magnetic needles knew how difficult it was to keep them quite free from disturbance of the air. His own impression was, that the motion of the indicators in the receivers in the present case was due to what Dr. Tyndall called "small tempests." They must have all found, from their own experiments, that it was impossible to get absolute rest; and if they allowed fire or anything else to act upon the receiver, no doubt the words of Dr. Tyndall, as to the "little tempests," would apply.

Dr. Goodman thought it would be unfair to prejudge the matter.

The president had no doubt that electricity would affect the needle; the only question was, to what extent.

Dr. Goodman added that, in experiments he had made, it had been observed that the effect was always about equal to ten degrees in one state of the sun, and only two in another, thus showing that the action was the result of some existing law.

GUN-COTTON.—At a recent meeting of the British Association, Mr. Scott Russell, in the mechanical section, read the "Report of the Committee on Gun-cotton." It stated that General Hay, of the Hythe School of Musketry, had constructed a new form of cartridge suited for the Whitworth rifle; that he had found the use of gun-cotton was clean, and had not the disadvantage of fouling the gun; that it had much less recoil, although the effect was the same; that one-third of the weight of charge was the equivalent proportion, and that it did not heat the gun. He had seen a gun fired at a target with gun-cotton from the shoulder of the general at 500 yards. Twelve successive shots were all placed in a space one foot wide by two feet high, and the value of the

practice was measured by the fact that the mean radius of deviation from the centre was between nine and ten inches. Thus, therefore, the use of gun-cotton in musketry had been proved, by English-made gun-cotton in English rifles, by an English general, to perform all that the committee last year reported of Austrian gun-cotton on the faith of the Austrian General Link. The next application made during the past year was as to the driving of tunnels, shafts, and drifts, in connection with engineering applications. It was stated by the committee that one-sixth of the weight of charge of cotton was equal in blasting effect to gunpowder, and this had been proved in practice in a number of instances. At Wingerworth Colliery, one-thirteenth of the weight of gun-cotton, as compared to gunpowder; in the slate quarries at Llanberis, at Allen Heads, one-seventh was required. At Allen Heads, at some lead mines, a canal was being driven seven miles long; the drift was seven feet by five in the hardest limestone. Both ends were worked by gun-cotton, fired by an electric battery. The great advantage experienced was that the air was not contaminated by smoke, and that the work could be carried on more rapidly. The next application had been made to the detaching of large masses of rock. This had been tried in several places; and it was found that one pound of gun-cotton was able to detach from thirty to sixty tons of rock. The Government appointed a committee—naval, military, and civil engineering, as well as chemical and physical science—and that committee was already engaged in a systematic course of experiments relating to the manufacture and keeping qualities of gun-cotton, and its use in artillery, small arms, and engineering.

ON TORPEDOES.

ADMIRAL SIR EDWARD BELCHER read a paper communicated by Captain Doty, of the Confederate States, "On torpedoes used by the Confederate States in the destruction of some of the Federal vessels of war, and the mode of attaching them to the rams." The following is an extract:—This engine of war having been attached to small wooden steamers, an attack was made by it against the Federal frigates *New Ironsides* and *Minnesota*, and so much damaged them by the explosion as to render them unfit for further effective services, till docked for repairs. It was also employed in like manner against the *Housatonic*, attached to the Federal blockading squadron off Charleston; which ship filled, and went down in eight minutes after the explosion of the torpedo under her counter. It is unhesitatingly asserted by competent judges, that a vessel properly constructed for the use and application of the torpedo battery, and possessing superiority of speed, would prove a formidable antagonist against a number of frigates, armed with the heaviest metal; for it would, by advancing end on, present the least surface to their fire, and always under the most acute angles. An especial advantage which it possesses is, that it may be worked at all times; for instance, in a rough sea, when ordinary guns could not be used—while it may be employed with certain success, under cover of darkness, against an enemy's fleet, destroying, disabling, or driving them away from the coast altogether.

Great economy, simplicity, and safety are, further, among the valuable and important qualities claimed for the submarine battery; neither the battery itself, nor the men working it are in the least exposed, the apparatus being situated much below the line of flotation. As this destructive agent comes more generally into use, which it assuredly must, after the experience of its terribly swift and sweeping effects furnished by the American war, a new field will be opened for the inventive genius of our naval constructors, to devise ways and means to ward off or escape so unpleasant a weapon of attack, more formidable than possessed by Black Princes, Warriors, Royal Sovereigns, &c.; for there is no ship afloat of sufficient strength to resist its power, no guns of heavy calibre enough to penetrate the armour of the vessel bearing it, when properly constructed for the purpose.

The Lords of the Admiralty have had this new arm of warfare under serious consideration, and referred it to a board of competent officers, who approved, and recommended its adoption, as an auxiliary for the defence of harbours and roadsteads. Though, at present, the authorities may not be impressed with the necessity of immediately taking up this new and most important development of naval engineering, the changes which it is destined to bring about in the naval armaments of all countries alike will assuredly be long before forced upon them, and the requisite measures for keeping up in this respect with the march of events must soon enter largely into the general estimates of expenditure for war purposes.

Admiral Belcher then proceeded to read the following paper: Such are the remarks which Captain Doty has forwarded to me respecting this important invention, which he kindly communicated and explained

to me, before it was offered to Her Majesty's Government, and my humble aid was afforded him by a letter expressing my conviction that, independent of the primary object of exploding heavy charges of gunpowder, or gun cotton under the counter of a vessel, it afforded special advantages for fouling or disabling the screws or rudders of vessels chased. But let us concede that, a ram, with a velocity of 10 knots, overhauls and touches the stern of the vessel she chases, going at the rate of 9½ knots, a half-knot velocity would not injure her opponent, although it might impair her steering, and bring her broadside to operate on her—in all probability, at such close quarters, to her detriment. But turn we now to these fittings:—First, viewing the invention before us as one simply for explosive purposes, a ram fitted with the means of projecting a simple shell under the counter, or into contact with the screw, would inevitably destroy, or at least, so derange rudder and screw that her great work of executing the ram manoeuvre at right angles to her antagonist would no longer be matter of doubt, and surrender would, under such difficulties, doubtless result. The French and other foreign governments have approved of the plans of Captain Dety. Our own government ordered the examination of them by a scientific committee, and it has expressed approbation in an official communication; but we do not learn that any further notice has been taken of this very important question.

The generally-received opinion, that most malignant diseases are the result of the development within the blood of certain animal or vegetable germs, has lately received confirmation by the inquiries of M. Davaine. This savant procured a quantity of the pus from a malignant pustule, and placed it under the microscope, when it presented thousands of those vegetable forms known to botanists as bacteria. To assure himself that no mistake had been made, he dried the remainder of the liquid, and introduced it into the blood of an animal, and the latter was attacked by disease of the spleen, and died in five days. An examination of its blood showed numerous bacteria.

FACETIÆ.

"ARRY," said an English father to his son, "up up and hurry down to Mr. Arris's, and hark 'im hif 'e 'as a bit hof hash, or hoak, to make a 'ammer 'andle."

A PROPHECY.—Charles Mathews, the elder, being asked what he was going to do with his son, (the young man's profession was to be that of an architect), "Why," answered the comedian, "he is going to draw houses, like his father."

TRUE CRITICISM.—A gentleman being prevailed upon to taste a lady's home-made wine, was asked for an opinion of what he had tasted. "I always give a candid one," said her guest when eating and drinking are concerned. It is admirable stuff to catch flies!

A MARRIAGE OF TWO PERSONS OF THE NAME OF GUNN took place the other day at Wick. All who sat down to the wedding dinner rejoiced in being members of the ancient clan Gunn, all being of that name, and regular sons of Gunna's.

THE MEDICINE MUST BE OF USE.—Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, once pressing the duke to take a medicine, with her usual warmth said, "I'll be hanged if it do not prove serviceable." Dr. Garth, who was present, exclaimed, "Do take it, then, my lord duke, for it must be of service one way or the other."

GOOD SPORT.—A gentleman on circuit narrating to Lord Norbury some extravagant feat in sporting, mentioned that he had lately shot thirty-three hares before breakfast.—"Thirty-three hares!" exclaimed Lord Norbury: "sounds, sir! then you must have been firing at a wig."

SEEING DOUBLE.—An old miser, who was notoriously parsimonious, being ill was obliged reluctantly to consult a doctor. "What shall I do with my head?" said the old man, "it's so dizzy I seem to see double." The doctor wrote a prescription and retired:—"When you see double, you will find relief if you count your money."

A DEALER in old books in London occasions a good deal of amusement to those who inspect his stock by the curious labels which he attaches to different works. What, for instance, would Dr. Johnson say the following:—"Lundun, and how to see hit;" and another labelled "Leaves of the Poays—price 'arf a crown."

A NEW THICK.—The following anecdote respecting the famous Eau de Cologne of Jean Marie Farina has just appeared in a French journal:—"There are many Farinas at Cologne, all of whom claim to be the real Simon Pure. A French gentleman, who was recently in that city, being anxious to obtain a few bottles, entered the handsomest of three fine shops, all pre-

tending to sell the genuine perfume. After making a purchase, he conjured the master of the establishment to say whether he was indeed the real Farina. The shopkeeper seemed greatly embarrassed, but at last confessed that he was not, and that the real Farina kept the shop on the other side of the street. The gentleman thanked him for his candour, and immediately made another purchase at the shop indicated. The next day the Frenchman, happening to pass through the street in company with a native of Cologne, related his adventure, and was not a little astonished when his friend exclaimed, 'The rascal! why, the shop to which he recommended you is a branch establishment of his own.'

DADDY'S PRIZE.

"Societies like these were the greatest possible benefit to the labouring class, and it was a satisfaction to him, whilst walking under a hedge, to overhear a little boy who was running by, halloo out, 'Daddy's got a prize.'—Colonel Fane, at the Leicester Agricultural Association Dinner.

Beneath a hedge of late walked I,
Mid acres rich and wide;
When a small boy came running by
Along the other side.
His father was a labouring man,
From this I did surmise,
That still that urchin, as he ran,
Cried "Daddy's won a prize!"

"For what, my boy?" I asked. "A wife
And twelve on us," he said,
"Without relief in all his life,
From parish, Daddy bred,"
"Good man," said I, "His earnings, what?
If you can tell me, speak."

He answered, "All as Daddy got,
Twelve shillings was a week."
"Well done!" His work no doubt was hard,
And moderate was his hire,
Now tell me, boy, then what reward
Was given to your sire?
A well-built cottage, I should guess,
To hold for life rent free.

Of course the couldn't give him less,
That's what's he got, maybe?"
"He! Naw," replied the little lout,
"A fat lot he enjoys!
O sitch a pair of just about
Now spick-and-span cord'roys!"
So saying, he pursued his way,
And, with receding cries,
Kept hallooing, "Hip, hip, hip, hooray!
Hoy! Daddy's won a prize!"

Punch.

AN OFFICIAL "BULL."—The royal licence, directing the Archbishop of Canterbury to consecrate Dr. Crowther ran as follows:—"We do, by this our licence, under our royal signet and sign manual, authorise and empower you, the said Rev. Samuel Adaji Crowther, to be Bishop of the United Church of England and Ireland, in the said countries in Western Africa beyond the limits of our dominions.

THE LETTER II.

Sir James Scarlett, when at the the Bar, had to cross-examine a witness, whose evidence it was thought would be very damaging unless he could be bothered a little, and his only vulnerable point was said to self-esteem. The witness presented himself in the box—a portly, over-dressed person, and Scarlett took him in hand.

Q. Mr. John Tomkins, I believe?

A. Yes.

Q. You are a stockbroker?

A. I am.

Scarlett regarded him attentively for a few moments, and then said.

"And a very fine, well-dressed *ham* you are, sir?"

The shout of laughter which followed completely discomfited the witness, and the counsel's point was gained.

It is customary in some churches in America, for the men to be placed on one side, and the women on the other. A clergyman, in the midst of his sermon, found himself interrupted by the talking of some of the congregation, of which he was obliged to take notice. A woman immediately rose, and wishing to clear her own sex from the aspersion, said:—"Observe, at least, your reverence, it is not on our side." So much the better, good woman; so much the better," answered the clergyman, "it will be the sooner over."

An amusing episode occurred a few days ago at the dinner the Duke of Nassau is in the habit of giving after the Baden races to the foreign sportsmen who attended them. The dinner takes place in the *salon* of the Russian Club. This year among the *invites* were the Duke of Mecklenburg, the Comte of Oldenburg-Saxe,

the Prince of Hesse-Cassel, some of the Jockey Club, and the Comte Westphaler, the winner of the annual steeplechase at Iffersheim. As the Duke of Nassau and his friends were sitting down to dinner, one of the party remarked that there were thirteen. This fatal number struck terror into the heart of most of the noble guests, who, however willing to risk their necks hunting or at a steeplechase, proved utter cowards in presence of this mystic number. The question was put to the vote, and an overpowering majority compelled the Duke of Nassau to send for the officer on guard to avert the fearful danger to which he had so inadvertently exposed his friends.

CALLING PET NAMES.

Two women appeared before the Recorder lately, one as a prisoner, the other as a prosecuting witness. On being sworn by the clerk, the witness mounted the platform, and the Recorder told her to tell what the woman had done to her.

"She called me names, yer honour ———"

"Well, what names did she call you?"

"What names? Why I can't tell you the half of them."

"Did she call you pet names?"

"You may well say that yer reverence. She called me a dirty ould hog, and a good-for-nothing, and a bad woman, and a whole heap of other names, sir."

Did she disturb the peace by calling you these names?"

"Av koorse she did; and it was more than any decent woman could stand."

"And what did you do?"

"Well, sir, I told her she was a miserable ould thief; and that her husband couldn't live wid her, and her childer was fit for the gallows, and her father was transported, and ———"

"Will you stop? What did you do to her?"

"Nothing at all. I only gave her a clip on the nose wid me shoe, and pushed her down, and ———"

"That will do. Both of you go home and never come here again."

ONE day this week, one of the retainers or agents in advance of a menagerie called upon a country tradesman, and, having informed him that a lioness in connection with the establishment had given birth to three little ones, he said: "Lord Sal—n lives herabout, don't he?" "Yes," was the rejoinder. "And the Earl of Haber—n, and the Earl of Her—l?" "Yea," "Well, now," said the showman, "which of these parties would think it the greatest honour to kiss the three young cubs?"

A CON FROM THE COUNTRY.—Why is little Prince Victor Albert like two of the delights of out-door life in fine weather? Because he's the sun and air of England.—*Fun.*

TO PROFESSOR JOHN ANDERSON,

"Wizard of the North."

John, Anderson, my "Pro," John,
When we were first acquaint,
With youthful cheeks unshaven,
To see your tricks I went;
But now I am much more bald, John,
Than thirty years ago;

Time's hand is quite as quick as yours,
John Anderson, my "Pro."
John Anderson, although, John,
My hat with cake you smother,
You brush it neatly; so, John,
I'll let you make another.
There's many a bright half-crown, John,
I've lent you, as you know,
But out of lemons back they came,
John Anderson, my "Pro."

John Anderson and Co. (John,
Your daughter counts for one),
By marvels managed so, John,
Bull is fairly done;
But those long words you use, John,
No lexicon can show;
Oh, what would Doctor Johnson say,
John Anderson, my "Pro?" —*Fun.*

TRAVEL TALK.

The Last Man in Town. Hallo, captain, how is i you are not out of town?

The Last Man but One in Town. Because I make it a rule never to go out of town until after everybody else has returned to town.

The Last Man. Curious! and might I enquire the reason of that strange whim, pray?

The Last Man but One. Because, sir, by this means I avoid all the intolerable rubbish that persons, because they have been for a few miles or for a few days on the Continent,—think they are privileged to bore their friends with the moment they return amongst us. Of all bores I think the travelling bore is the one that goes to the greatest lengths in his powers of boredom.

The man who goes to the top of Mont Blanc should be condemned to squat there for the remainder of his life, to prevent his ever touching on the subject in any other form afterwards.—*Exit into the Club in a good rage.* Punch.

ON DR.—In the Scotch Athletic Sports which took place in the presence of the Prince of Wales, one Donald Dinne carried off most of the prize. "Who is that?" asked his Royal Highness, pointing to the stalwart peasant. "The Dee-side Champion, sir," was the answer. "The Dee-side Champion!" quoth his Royal Highness, pleasantly, "that he is, Dee-cidedly."—Punch.

THE *Charivari* publishes a woodcut representing a Prussian soldier grown of enormous size, and covered with laurel, having at his side an Austrian, also in uniform, but as thin as a thread-paper. The latter says: "It is really altogether annoying; you are not leaving me the smallest wreath of glory!" The other replies, "Ah! my dear ally, I look so handsome as I am! And then you know you have the honour of accompanying me. Is not that enough?"

STATISTICS.

IMPORTATION OF CORN AND FLOUR.—Mr. F. Purdy, in a paper read at the British Association in the section of Economic Science and Statistics, stated that in the ten years ending 1863, the aggregate value of our grain and flour imports was 250,203,000l.; the quantity consumed at home was of the value of 247,082,000l.; in round numbers we had in the past decade consumed 25,000,000l. worth of foreign grain yearly; in the four ending in 1845, the annual imports were equal to 8 of a bushel per head on the population; in the four years 1852-55, the average rose to 2.3 bushels; and in the last four years 4.4 bushels; hence under free-trade we have received nearly six times as much as under the last four years of the sliding scale.

SAVINGS-BANKS.—The amount of deposits in the 603 savings-banks (not post-office banks) in the United Kingdom was 40,952,311l. at the close of the financial year in November last. The number of accounts was 1,556,842; and there were in the year 1,719,412 payments in, averaging 4l. 7s. 10d. each, and 940,383 payments out, averaging 8l. 12s. 6d. The year's expenses of management were 135,776l., or 6s. 7d. per cent. on the capital. The rate of interest allowed averaged 2l. 19s. 2d. in England, 2l. 18s. 10d. in Scotland, and 2l. 16s. 11d. in Ireland. There are five great savings-banks in the kingdom, each of them with more than 1,000,000l. of deposits—Manchester, Exeter, Glasgow, Bishopsgate, and St. Martin's place, the last holding more than 1,800,000l. The return of the Bowden and Altrincham Bank states that there was a balance of no less than 12,695l. in the hands of the treasurer in November. Many of the smaller banks are only open for one hour in the week. Even the Bristol Bank, with about 14,000 accounts and 465,000l. owing to depositors, is only open for seven hours in a week.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

COFFEE AND CHICORY.—Housewives or bachelors who are particular about this pleasant drink will find some useful and minute information as to the best mode of brewing it. Mr. Simmonds prefers coffee made with cold water. It is remarkable that the use of coffee in Arabia is not of more than four centuries' standing, the mother country of the plant being apparently Abyssinia. The chief seats of the cultivation are now the Madras presidency and Ceylon.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF HEALTH.

"BREAD AND BUTTER" are the only articles of food of which we never tire for a day, from early childhood to extreme old age. A pound of fine flour of Indian (corn meal) contains three times as much meat as one pound of butcher's roast beef; and if the whole product of the grain, bran and all, were made into bread, fifteen per cent. more of nutriment would be added. Unfortunately the bran, the coarsest part, is thrown away; the very part which gives soundness to the teeth, and strength to the bones, and vigour to the brain.

Five hundred pounds of fine flour give to the body thirty pounds of the bony element; while the same quantity of bran gives one hundred and twenty-five pounds! This bone is "lime," the phosphate lime, the indispensable element of health to the whole human body, from the want of the natural supply of which multitudes of persons go into a general "decline." But swallowing phosphates in the shape of powders, or syrups, to cure these "declines," has little or no virtue.

The articles containing these phosphates must pass through nature's laboratory; must be subject to her manipulations, in alchemies specially prepared by Almighty Power and skill, in order to impart their pec-

uliar virtues to the human frame: in plainer phrase, the shortest, safest, and most infallible method of giving strength to the body, bone, and brain, thereby arresting disease and building up the constitution, is to eat and digest more bread made out of the whole grain, whether of wheat, rye, corn, or oats.

But we must get an appetite for eating more, and a power of digesting more. Not by the artificial and lazy methods of drinking bitters and taking tonics, but by moderate, continued, and remunerative muscular exercise in the open air every day, rain or shine. And that we may eat the more of it, the bread must be good and cheap and healthful; and that which combines these three qualities to a greater extent than any other known on the face of the globe, as far as we know, is made thus:

To three quarts of corn meal, add one pint of bread-sponge; water sufficient to wet the whole; add one half pint of flour and a teaspoonful of salt. Let it rise; then knead well, unsparingly for the second time. Place the dough in the oven, and let it bake an hour and a half. Keep on trying until you succeed in making a light, well-baked loaf.

IS THERE ANYTHING TO LAUGH AT?

Is there anything to laugh at
In this weary world of ours,
That plodding on its axle turns
Through sunshine and through showers?

Could our physician feel her pulse,
And note her wrinking care,
They'd doubtless say she stood in need
Of change of scene and air.

So long she's gazed into the face
Of Mercury and Mars,
Perchance a journey they'd prescribe
To visit distant stars.

Is there anything to laugh at
In these peculiar days,
When every sunbeam seems to wear
A privity-coat of haze?

When the babies all look ancient,
And youth forgets its prime,
And lordly manhood, lost in thought,
Declines before its time?

And matrons mourn a thorny path,
Forgetful of its flowers?
Is there anything to laugh at
In these dreary days of ours?

Our grandmothers lived a plain life,
And less intense, we're told;
Did not make thousands in a week,
Or speculate in gold;

But dwelt in humble homes content,
Free from ambition's pang;
And often raised a loud guffaw,
Till roof and rafters rang.

They lived the longer for it,
And happier, too, I ween;
And found in nature's simple joy
A remedy for spleen.

If there's anything to laugh at
In this sad world of ours,
Make haste and tell us, ere we lose
The appreciative powers.

For we are growing cross and old,
And fain once more would know
What healthful, heartfelt laughter means
Ere from this earth we go.

L. H. S.

GEMS.

EVERY man magnifies the injuries he has received and lessens those he has inflicted.

We should not forget that life is a flower, which is no sooner fully blown than it begins to wither.

BELIEVE your friend honest to make him so, if he be not honest; since, if you distrust him, you make his falsehood a piece of justice.

GOOD-NATURE, like the little busy bee, collects sweetness from every herb; while ill-nature, like the spider, collects poison from honeyed flowers.

THERE is a chord of love running through all the sounds of creation; but the ear of love alone can distinguish it.

CORRECTION does much, but encouragement will do more. Encouragement after censure is like the sun after a shower.

LITTLE things should not be despised; for many threads will bind an elephant, and many drops will make a river.

WEALTH, like beauty, is generally disparaged and eagerly sought, while poverty is highly praised and

carefully avoided by all. It is like a case which often happens in society—eulogizing people whom he would not associate with, and sneering at others whom we don't care to "cut."

WHEN dunce calls us fools, without proving us to be so, our best retort is to prove them to be fools, without condescending to call them so.

CONVERSATION is a very serious matter. There are men with whom an hour's talk would weaken one more than a day's fasting.

MISCELLANEOUS.

ALL the French men-of-war are for the future to have small steamers on board, to be used in case of need.

THE youthful Crown Prince of Austria has just received the Order of the Black Eagle from the King of Prussia.

HONOURS do not always come to young soldier even in France. *Eccle signum*, M. Mareschal, aged 106, senior officer of the army of France, is just decorated.

LONDON is now connected with Sidon and with Jerusalem by telegraph. How strange to see the old Bible lands invaded by modern inventions and improvements!

THE British Government has given £500 to the sister of the late Dr. Edward Vogel, who lost his life in Central Africa whilst travelling for the Foreign Office, giving his services gratuitously.

A LARGE number of masons and other artisans are still engaged on the royal mausoleum at Frogmore; the works of which, it is expected, will not be completed before the latter end of next year. The cost of this magnificent tomb is estimated at one hundred thousand pounds.

A RELIC OF ANCIENT CARDIFF.—Some alterations were being made in premises in Duke Street, when the workmen discovered a subterranean passage, with a Tudor arch at the entrance. An ancient fire-place was also discovered on the same premises during recent alterations.

It is said that sixty Schleswig-Holsteiners, formerly wealthy farmers, are coming over to England as a deputation to our Foreign Secretary, and that the like number are going to the Emperor of the French to ask for justice for their country against the German oppressors.

LEOTARD IN RETIREMENT.—Leotard, the famous gymnast, has terminated his engagement at the Paris Cirque. He is going to Rochefort to give a gratuitous representation, for the benefit of the sufferers by the fire at Limoges; after which, he intends taking some repose on an estate he has purchased in the neighbourhood of Toulouse.

THE christening of the infant son of the Princess Royal (Princess of Prussia) will take place on the 18th of October next, that being the birthday of the Crown Prince, his father. The ceremony will be conducted with great pomp. After the christening, the Princess Royal will go to the South of France, for the benefit of her health.

A SINGULAR plot against the life of the Emperor of Austria has been discovered at Vienna. The conspirators were mere boys, fourteen years of age. One of them dropped a pocket-book, in which was revealed the whole plot. This youth has been sentenced to five years' imprisonment, and his supposed associates were acquitted.

An ecclesiastical objection has been suggested to the contemplated marriage of the King of Greece. The orthodox Eastern canons prohibit matrimony between a sister and her brother-in-law; consequently, if Princess Dagmar become wife of the Czarowitz, his sister, the Grand-Duchess Maria (born in 1858) cannot wed his Athenian Majesty.

THE Castle of Carlisle is advertised by the War Office authorities to be let for trade purposes! but as the inhabitants of the town consider that this would be a degradation of the time-honoured edifice, they have got up a memorial, praying that the castle should be used as a barrack for the Cumberland Militia.

EXTRAORDINARY FIG.—A correspondent has forwarded us the following dimensions of "Garibaldi, the Champion Pig," which is now being shown by its breeder at Park Place, Park Road, Clapham. He is 22 months old, 9ft. long, 3ft. 6in. high, 7ft. round the body, and 4ft. round the jaw. His owner says "there is room to make him 150 stone."

POST ORIT PATRIOTISM.—A will, proved last week in London, concludes as follows:—"And it being my conviction that every man who is possessed of property should do something for the benefit of his country, I give and bequeath to the Right Hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the time being the sum of £300, to be applied by him towards the reduction of the National Debt."

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A. DRENNY.—The communication to which our correspondent's letter refers is declined, with thanks.

W. S.—No communication of the kind referred to has been received.

CECILE DE LEON.—Your handwriting is very creditable for your age. Indeed, it could not be better.

ROSA.—No, the ceremony of shaking hands on an introduction is not necessary. We cannot supply you with a recipe for the purpose in view.

LILLY BELL is ready to accept as a suitor any gentleman in her Majesty's service who is of a dark complexion, tall, and manly.

BIRD OF THE SEA would like to correspond matrimonially with a son of Neptune. Is considered very pretty, is 5 ft 4 in. in height, and just twenty-one.

JAMES R.—You are not too old to go to sea; but if you are well advised, you will remain at home and attend to business.

A WIDOW of thirty-five, who possesses a comfortable home, wishes to assume again the pleasant fetters of matrimony. Is of dark complexion, and of middle height.

Y. Z.—There are in Nos. 66 and 71 recipes for strengthening the hair; and to strengthen the hair is, of course, to prevent it from falling off.

ANNIE, twenty years of age, with dark eyes and hair, 5 ft 3 in. in height, and very nice-looking, wishes to correspond with a steady young gentleman, who is seeking for a good and loving wife.

A. A. ALEXANDER, aged twenty-four, good-looking, and 5 ft 9 in. in height, is desirous of meeting with a lady, respectably connected, good-looking, and of a loving disposition, and capable of making a tradesman's home happy.

GOLIVIE.—Most assuredly, if the necessary steps be taken within the time limited by the law, a mere offer of marriage by a third person does not release you from the legal responsibility of contributing towards the maintenance.

EDIE is a lonely maiden, who would, we think, make a treasure of a wife. "Edie" is tall, fair, well educated, and pretty, and has a very loving heart. ("Edie's" handwriting is good.)

ARTHUR.—You can inspect the will at Doctors' Commons; the charge for which is 1s. You can also obtain a copy of it; the charge for which depends on the length of the will; and is generally about 18s.

GEORGE is seeking for a well-to-do Kentish maiden, who, by-the-bye, must not be more than 5 ft 1 in. in height, with whom to wed. He is a respectable tradesman, aged twenty, height 5 ft 3 in., and good-looking.

T. B. R.—The best and cheapest way of obtaining not only glasses to make a telescope with, but the perfected instrument itself, is to obtain them from some wholesale astronomical instrument maker. Handwriting is very good.

WM. HENRY ALLEN.—If you have such strong proclivities for shooting, why not take out a license, and be on the safe side of the law? No sportsman would think of killing sparrows, and we certainly do not feel disposed to aid you in your sparrowcald design.

IDA LEE.—A lady who is on so intimate a footing, and is so good-natured as to work a pair of slippers for a gentleman, need not do anything more except present the pattern to him, the gentleman's bootmaker undertaking to finish them.

OCEAN WAVE wishes to obtain a nautical lover; and if a willower, preferred. She is twenty-four years of age, 5 ft 4 in. in height, black hair, light brown eyes, rosy complexion, good figure, but no fortune. *Carte de visite* exchanged, if desired.

M. A. B., a bachelor, twenty-two years of age, 5 ft 6 in. in height, with dark hair, rather good-looking, in a highly respectable profession, and having a moderate income, is very desirous of corresponding with a young lady about nineteen or twenty, of a quiet, domesticated disposition.

MINTON is a bachelor of twenty-two, 5 ft 8 in. in height, and rather dark complexion, has £450 a year, is very fond of music, being a performer on four instruments. "Minton" is tired of single life, and is very anxious to become a married man.

JOSEPH, a serious, good-tempered, and good-looking widower, forty-eight years of age, having an income of about £120 per annum, and free from all incumbrances, would be glad to correspond matrimonially with any lady of middle age, possessing a small income.

MINNIE, a country maiden of twenty, who dislikes the country as a place to settle in, is desirous of entering into a matrimonial engagement with some gentleman from a town. Is 5 ft 2 in. in height, has fair hair, grey eyes, genteel figure, considered rather good-looking, and could undertake the management of a house with ease.

NIL DISPERANDUM.—Clearly your proper course to follow is that pointed out by the young lady herself, who seems to possess both a nice consideration for your feelings and a right sense of duty. That you love her is no reason at all why she should love you; and in frankly telling you that she cannot do so, she has acted very commendably. Whilst remembering that "faint heart never won fair lady," you must not forget that, after the explicit statement of the lady in this case that she can never be more to you than a friend,

you are not justified in persevering with lover-like attentions; she has the same right to be left as free in this respect as she wishes you to be.

ACQUETTA, a junior partner in a manufacturing firm, is desirous of corresponding matrimonially with a young lady about nineteen years of age, affectionate, and a good housekeeper. Is twenty-one years of age; has dark brown hair, light complexion, is 5 ft 5 in. in height, and rather good-looking. *Carte de visite* requested.

HARRY, with a view to matrimony, would be happy to exchange *carte de visite* with a young lady about seventeen, who must be handsome, fond of music, good-tempered, and sociable; need not have a fortune or income; but must belong to a respectable family. He is considered good-looking and witty, and is fond of music.

M. A. S., who is nineteen years of age, with light blue eyes and light brown hair, fair complexion, is 5 ft 2 in. in height, would like to correspond with a young gentleman of her own height and complexion, who is about twenty years of age, and does not require his wife to possess any fortune except a loving heart.

A SAXON, who is twenty-one years of age, 5 ft 8 in. in height, has travelled a great deal, and has good prospects, is anxious to marry and settle. The lady should be about nineteen or twenty years of age, a good housekeeper, fond of music, and not object to a year's courtship. Fortune no object.

ROBERT, who is twenty years of age, 5 ft 8 in. in height and "Albertus," aged 17, 5 ft 4 in. in height, both having good prospects, and being of gentlemanly appearance, are desirous of corresponding matrimonially with two young ladies, whose age must not be above eighteen years of age. *Carte de visite* indispensable.

BACHELORS AND BACHELICES.

As lone clouds in autumn eve,
As a tree without its leaves,
As a shirt without its sleeves,
Such are bachelors!

As syllabubs without a head,
As jokes not laugh'd at when they're said,
As cucumbers without a bed,
Such are bachelors!

As creatures of another sphere,
As things that have no business here,
As inconsistencies, 'tis clear,
Such are bachelors!

When lo! as souls in fabled bowers,
As beings born for happier hours,
As butterflies in favoured flowers,
Such are married men!

These perform their functions high;
They bear their fruit, and then they die,
And little sprouts come by-and-by,
So die married men!

But, ah! as thistles on the blast
From every garden bed are east,
And fade on dreary wastes at last,
So die bachelors!

Then, John, pray change that grub-like skin,
Your butterfly career begin,
And wed, and vow that 'tis a sin
To be a bachelor!

MARY.—In making a present to a person of the opposite sex, with whom you are not even on speaking terms, you have committed a grave impropriety, and laid yourself open to serious misconstruction of your motives. Without question, you must wait until the gentleman chooses to make advances.

THE UNHAPPY.—We had, a few months ago, a correspondent who afflicted herself almost as much as you do on the subject of superfluous hair; and to her we gave a recipe which, we incline to think, must have been found efficacious. As it is rather lengthy, we cannot reprint it; but refer you to the reply to "Brighton P." in No. 48.

YETAK, a gentleman near to middle age, good education and superior tastes, and in a lucrative business, is anxious to get married soon. His best ideal is a lady from twenty-three to thirty years of age, good-looking, plump, possessing some means of her own, and of warm heart and affectionate disposition.

GEORGE F. wishes to make a matrimonial engagement with a young lady who could sympathize with him in what do our lady readers think?—well, his manly love for horses. He is eighteen years of age, 5 ft 5 in. in height, has light complexion, is tolerably good-looking, respectably connected, and holds a lucrative situation.

NELLY is a disconsolate maiden of twenty-two, 5 ft 1 in. in height, with dark brown hair and eyes, and thoroughly domesticated, but living in a benighted village that hardly contains one good-looking "disengaged" bachelor, requests us to signify the melancholy fact that she is as yet without an "offer."

WM. B. S.—The £50-note which your uncle gave you before his decease was probably so given in consideration of his having previously resided with you for three months. In this case it would be a payment in discharge of a debt; and of course you cannot be compelled to refund it to his estate. It will be your better course, however, to place all the circumstances before a solicitor. (See also reply to "Arthur.")

WILLIAM W.—At your age, we fear there is no remedy for the malformation, which might doubtless have been corrected by the use of splints and bandages at an earlier age. To your other question we can only reply by advising you to consult a medical man, as the local affection on the face is merely a symptom of constitutional derangement, for which you should undergo treatment.

M. R.—Of course it is impossible for us to decide whether you have or have not a valid title to the property at Fulham, now in the possession of a noble lord. If the facts are all precisely as you state them, you would seem, however, to have a colourable claim; but whether it is well founded, must be decided by a court of law; and if you have not yet laid all the circumstances before a solicitor, we strongly advise you to do so.

ESPERANCE probably knows that "smooth and fresh-looking faces" and those that have a "sallow appearance" are

equally gifts, as Goodman Dogberry would say, "that come by nature." We confess our inability to supply him with a recipe for producing a facial appearance of the former kind; and as to the fashion in which moustaches, whiskers, and hair should be worn, why again we must confess our inability to enlighten him. If "Epicure" be "an aristocrat" he will wear the hirsute adornments after the fashion of aristocrats; if not—not. *Chacun a son goût.*

ESSIE K. wishes to correspond matrimonially with a rather tall and dark young gentleman, of about twenty or a honest hand and heart, and is moderately good-looking. Twenty-two years, who is in a respectable position, but "Essie" has just turned seventeen, is possibly good-looking, has brown hair, blue eyes, and nice teeth; about 5 ft 2 in. in height, and highly respectable.

ALBIONIA CLIFFORD has many admirers, but no one whom she admires or likes well enough to marry. She is 5 ft 6 in. in height, nineteen years of age, and has blue eyes; is not possessed of a fortune, but an only daughter, and having learned a business, can support herself. Any unhappy bachelor who may wish to be made happy by winning "Albionia's" hand and heart must be between the ages of twenty and twenty-five, dark, or inclining that way, and not less than her own height.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED.—"H. S." would like to open a correspondence with "Leoline Violette." He is 5 ft 10 in. in height, gentlemanly in appearance, and holds a respectable situation—"Zetuk," who is organist of a parish church and professor of music, having an income of £150 a year, 24 years of age, tall and handsome, and generally accounted a good sort of "fellow," is smitten so deeply with "Edith" that he will be delighted to open a matrimonial correspondence forthwith—"Ada" would like to correspond with "Benjamin." She is seventeen years of age, and 5 ft 11 in. in height—"Walter Percy" is a candidate for "Jessie's" hand and heart. Is twenty-three years of age, rather tall, dark, and very musical, with an income of £400 per annum, and is very fond of home—"Madeline" would be happy to correspond with "Henry Camille" ("Henry" *carte de visite* requested) with a view to an early marriage. Is nearly thirty years of age, tall, dark, good-looking, passionately fond of music, very affectionate disposition, and would make a good and loving wife—"Edith" would like to correspond with "Alfred," with a view to matrimony. Is eighteen years of age, about 5 ft 4 in. in height, a blonde, with blue eyes and nut-brown hair; will shortly be in receipt of £250 a year; and would make a loving wife for "Alfred."—"Rocheater" will be most happy to correspond matrimonially with "Amelia" and is impatient to become further acquainted with her—"H. Brookes" is anxious that "Jessie," with whom he desires to correspond matrimonially, should favour him with further particulars. He is 5 ft 11 in. in height, has dark, curly hair, and is handsome—in reply to "Excelsior," "Leoline" states that she is disposed to accept a matrimonial engagement. Is tall and dark, 22 years of age, extremely fond of music and poetry, a good housekeeper, and in possession of £100 per annum. "Excelsior's" *carte de visite* desired as a preliminary—"Ida Lee" and "Jessie" reply to "Alfred" and "Albert" that they would like to become acquainted with those two non-commissioned cavalry officers, for whom they would make truly devoted wives. "Ida Lee" is tall and fair, has light blue eyes, and is just twenty. "Jessie" is twenty-one years of age, 5 ft 4 in. in height, has blue eyes and rosy complexion—"Carolus Rex" for the special edification of "Polly," forwards a long communication, filled with particulars, genealogical and social, the gist of which is that he is a gentleman boasting a family tree, and desires "Polly" to inform him what are the special qualifications which she thinks an acceptable suitor should possess—"Solitary Carlo" wishes to correspond matrimonially with "Bella." He is twenty-one years of age, 5 ft 9 in. in height, has dark hair and eyes, moustache and whiskers, is well educated, good-tempered, and generally considered handsome. Has £200 a year now, and in a few years will be in a much better position. Would prefer preliminary exchange of *carte de visite*—"W. E. W." places his hand and heart at the disposal of "Bella." He is twenty-one years of age, 5 ft 10 in. in height, dark complexion, has a good income from business, and is very fond of music—"A. R. D." desires to open a matrimonial correspondence with "Bella." Is twenty-four years of age, and has an income exceeding £400 per annum—"Edith" and "Jane" would be happy to correspond matrimonially with "Alfred" and "Albert." Each is of the medium height, twenty years of age, fair, and considered good-looking, with a small income. *Carte de visite* exchanged—"Eva" and "Carry M." answer "Harry Clifton" and "Obliged."—"Eva," whose preference is in favour of the former, is a nice-looking blonde, under twenty years of age, 5 ft 2 in. in height, and has a genteel figure. "Carry," whose age is 22, is a brunette, 5 ft 1 in. in height, with nice dark brown hair and eyes; she is well connected and thoroughly domesticated—"J. H. H." who is 19 years of age, well educated, and 5 ft 6 in. in height, is immensely smitten with the description of "Leoline Violette," with whom he would be most happy to exchange *carte de visite*; and, should a mutual approbation of person ensue, correspond, with a view to matrimony—"Adeline" and "Maud," both being 18 years of age and of medium height—the former having blue eyes, light curly hair, and rosy colour; the latter having dark eyes and hair, and pale complexion—intimate their willingness to correspond matrimonially with "Albert" and "Alfred." "Adeline" confesses to a pet passion for "Albert"; "Maud" prefers "Alfred."

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